

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE PRESENTS **BING**

No. 38
June
1975

Edited by

JOHN
BASSETT

Secretary:
REG BRISTO

"BING"

The ICC's Official Quarterly
Magazine



Bing at his
beloved
Pebble Beach
Jan. 1966

THE FINEST MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INCOMPARABLE
BING CROSBY

Please note: Pages 39/40 may appear to be missing but the "Hello Joe" page is 39/40 transposed to make for continuity in reading.

HON. PRESIDENT: BING CROSBY -----

Publicity Officers: BOB ROBERTS, 56 Thorold Rd., Chatham, Kent.
LESLIE GAYLOR,
114 Medina Avenue,
NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT.

DISCOGRAPHICAL CONSULTANT:

JOHN BASSETT,
72 Stromness Road,
SOUTHEND-on-SEA, ESSEX.
SS2 4JQ

=====

Printed, published & produced by
REG BRISTO at 7, Greenmeadow Close,
CAMBRAN, Gwent, NP4 3NR.

The INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE, annual subscriptions £1.50; US and Canada 5 dollars; Australia, New Zealand and European countries sterling equivalent. Members overseas are invited to pay by the most inexpensive and convenient method but it should be borne in mind that cheques (checks) drawn on private banks in the US/Canada can be eroded as far as ICC is concerned by negotiating charges. Banks with a London office are, of course, very suitable.

See inside for taped material facilities.

FILMS & TV: BERT BISHOP, "Tideway",
Imperial Ave., Maylandsea,
Chelmsford, Essex.....and
KEITH PARKINSON, 55 Long Ridge,
Rastrick, Brighouse, Yorks,
HD6 3RZ

MEMBERS ARE EARNESTLY REQUESTED TO KEEP THE "REQUESTS" FOR BING RECORDS FLOWING TO THE RADIO, LOCAL AND NATIONAL, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE NEW LONDON RECORDINGS APPEAR.

PLEASE SEND LETTERS, ARTICLES, PICTURES, CUTTINGS &C. TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

ORIGINAL MATERIAL (C) 1975.

* C O N T E N T S *

"BING"-38 JUNE 1975 *

Editorial	3	Bing Topics from Hull - or	
Bing's London Recording Session,		High Water!	20
Part 2	4	An Important Announcement	21
Eric and Bing on Radio Nottingham	7	Bing on the Box (TV and Radio	
Keeping Track (Record Reviews)	8	Reviews)	22
He's Still Number One	10	Crosby Shoppe	26
Celluloid Crosby	11	A "Mixed" Blessing	27
Book Review	14	Do I Hear You Saying? (The	
What's New?	15	Editor's Postbag)	28
Let's all meet at HMV	15	They've Sung About Bing	29
The New Paul Whiteman Orchestra	16	More Crosby Shoppe	30
The "BING" Tape Service	16		
Crosbyography	17	REG BRISTO writes ...	31 onwards

 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ EDITORIAL @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

We are pleased to announce that RICHARD JOHN BASSETT was born on 22nd April - just 10 days short of Bing's birthday! As Bert Bishop remarked, "Bing's will be the third voice he'll hear!" - in fact, it's worth placing on record that Richard's first 'taster' occurred on 30th April. The disc in question? - "Little Angel" ... an apt choice! Susan was thrilled to receive a letter of congratulations from Bing, dated 2nd May (his birthday). This quickly followed the receipt of a signed copy of their photograph together at Chappells, on which Bing had written, "To Susan, love, Bing Crosby". As the mother of a fine little son, she certainly deserves such unique rewards.

Once again, we've come up with another discographical discovery guaranteed to send the 'old brigade' flying to their collections. It makes me wonder how these things ever get overlooked in the first place! (see page 17)

Regrettably, this will be the last copy of "BING" to be produced under my editorship, for reasons stated elsewhere. In consequence, I will be devoting more time to the constant revision and publication of the ICC's discographical projects (which can't be a bad thing!) so rather than having lost an Editor, the society has gained a full-time 'discologist' - to use a word coined in earlier years. Editing "BING" has certainly kept me busy but it's been a most rewarding experience which I wouldn't have missed for the world. Before joining me on my final excursion into print, I'd like to thank you all for tolerating my presence in the editorial chair during the course of the last five years.

BEST WISHES.

JOHN BASSETT.

 * HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS ISSUE *

BING CROSBY on USA 78 rpm - a complete numbers listing compiled by Jim Hayes (pages 17 to 20)

Alternate 'take' discovery on UK 'HMV' extended-play issue ... another one in the eye for earlier discographers! (page 17)

"Sinatra ... a paradoxical cuss" - claims Bing (page 12)

Open invitation to ICC members to visit Neve Electronic Holdings, a company which manufactures sound mixing consoles for recording studios (including Chappells!) (page 27)

A further selection of items
appertaining to ...

@@
BING'S LONDON RECORDING SESSION

Compiled by the EDITOR.

"MUSIC WEEK", a well known trade journal, devoted a page of its 15th March edition to Bing's "50 Years at the Top". Much of the article proved to be little more than the usual run-of-the-mill examination of Bing's long and varied career, so we'll avoid lengthy and unnecessary repetition by selecting extracts referring only to the events at Chappells.

The write-up was headed by a black-and-white studio photograph showing a smiling Bing with Ken Barnes and Pete Moore. A copy of "Bon Vivant" can be seen on the music stand, which suggests that the picture dates from the second session of 20th February.

The interview was conducted by Peter Jones and selected paragraphs appear below ...

Crosby decided to record in London for a variety of reasons. "For one, you really do have a bunch of fine musicians here now - stronger than ever. I'm just not qualified to analyse just why recording in London is different to New York or the West Coast, but I know I feel real comfortable in London."

Another attraction for Crosby to record in London was an album of Johnny Mercer singing his own songs. Arrangements were by Pete Moore and the LP was recorded by long-time Crosby fan, Ken Barnes.

Barnes told 'Music Week': "It really started in September last year, when I was in California and got an introduction to Bing Crosby Enterprises. On my mind was the fact that Crosby had had his operation, that all was well, and that he'd never signed a recording contract since leaving American Decca. His office staff told me that if he liked me he'd work with me. And at the end of the visit, I asked for his autograph and he wrote, "To Ken, I hope we work together, Bing". Originally I wanted to call one album 'Bing Back On The Ball' but he didn't like the possible interpretation of the title, that he'd kind of been off the ball. Now it's to be called 'That's What Life Is All About'. It's an optimistic sort of album in terms of content. Bit of beat, old stuff and new songs. But the second album, which won't be out until next year, has no title as yet, but it's made up of songs mostly chosen by Crosby".

Once the planning was over, Crosby said he liked the idea of a visit to London and felt he might as well do two albums while he was at it. One major company turned down the very idea of handling an obviously expensive Crosby package, but United Artists felt it was a good bet.

In just two weeks, working reasonable day-time hours only, the two albums were completed.

In addition to national coverage of the recording project, local newspapers in the home towns of PHIL CLARKE and FRANK MURPHY published their own accounts of Phil and Frank's meeting with Bing on the last day of the sessions. Relevant passages from their individual reports are printed below ...

PHIL CLARKE is still telling his friends about meeting Bing in the London recording studio when he came across to record two new albums for United Artists. With other members of the ICC - the International Crosby Circle - he spent the morning with Bing, chatting and watching him work. Says Phil: "I'll never forget that great moment when I shook his hand". In Phil's home, large photographs and paintings of Bing adorn

the walls, side by side with record sleeves and many mementoes. And the cabinets are bulging with precious and fragile 78s, scores of EP's and dozens of LP's. All Crosby. Says Phil: "Some people think I'm mad, but I don't smoke or drink - I get my pleasures from Bing's voice".

FRANK MURPHY was among the chosen few who met Bing at the New Bond Street studios used by Chappells and United Artists. "It was", says Frank, "a memorable occasion. I had previously met Bing during private visits and in 1961 I had watched him and Bob Hope shoot several scenes for 'THE ROAD TO HONG KONG', but I had never actually heard Bing sing in person". Frank has been following the Crosby fortunes since the early 1950's, was a co-president of the British Crosby Society and secretary of the International Crosby Circle before becoming UK representative of the American Club Crosby. "The voice is fantastic", adds Frank, "...infinitely superior to anything on record or tape".

In a letter to LESLIE GAYLOR dated 11th April, Bing writes:

I enjoyed having you all at the studio. I didn't think it was much fun for you - just listening to those things over and over, but if it gave you an idea of how records are made and how the engineering department works, I'm sure it was a useful visit.

I imagine Ken Barnes and the people have got some promotions lined up for when I come over in June. I think they had something in mind about doing something on the Parkinson Show. Maybe some songs from the album, or something in that direction. We'll see what develops.

We are all fine here at home. The kids are very busy with school and various activities.

If I come over in June, I plan to bring the two boys with me for a tour of the Scottish golf courses. They're both very keen players now and play well enough to take care of themselves. In fact, they beat me.

I've got a copy of the cassette that Ken Barnes sent over, with the first album on it. Sounds pretty good. It's just a question, I think, of whether or not there's a market for this kind of material.

The arrangements are all right, and I think I sing them pretty well, but then, as I say, who can say what they're going to pick up and buy in the current market.

As ever,

(signed) BING

Bing Crosby

In conclusion, record producer KEN BARNES sums up the February events and announces the label sequence of each album ...

No doubt, you'll be pleased to learn that I have now completed all the mixdowns and editing of the 26 songs which Bing recorded for us, and everyone who has heard the results is in raptures over the quality of performance. It's difficult for me to enthuse without sounding immodest or chauvenistic about the whole thing. But if I do feel moved to boast about the quality it is with certain knowledge that a lot of helpful and talented people contributed to the result. Not least of all Leslie Gaylor for providing me with

the necessary contacts in the first place. Then there is my good friend Pete Moore who worked so hard and diligently to provide Bing with accompaniments that were both sympathetic to his singing style and yet still acceptable to the demands of the contemporary market.

But most of all, there was Bing. The master craftsman, the gifted professional, the strolling raconteur with enough charisma to sink the entire rock scene with one wave of his hand. Everyone connected with this venture will always be grateful for the fact that Bing took the time to fly almost 7,000 miles to do the gig personally. If these albums are great (and believe me they are) let us not forget that Bing is really the central force that held all these marvellous elements - the songs, the great arrangements, the sound quality - together. The project revolved around him and it was his presence that made it great.

I cannot estimate what the absolute total cost of the project is, except that it is perhaps the most expensive project ever mounted by United Artists. On an artistic level they are extremely pleased at the results. Commercially, it could prove to be a big winner, but it will need a lot of work on everyone's part. I know how very keen the ICC members are to help, and I know that United Artists will be delighted to have their co-operation. It is highly possible that the title song of the first album could well do for Bing what "And I Love You So" and "My Way" did for Como and Sinatra respectively.

The first album will be released around the end of August/ beginning of September and will actually be co-promoted with a new biography being published in September by W.H.Allen Ltd. entitled simply "BING", written by Charles Thompson. We have a terrific cover shot of Bing on the album, and this same picture will be used on the cover of the book.

In order to keep members in the picture, here is the label sequence of each album ...

"THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT"

side one:

That's what life is all about
Breezin' along with the breeze
No time at all
I love to dance like they used
to dance
Have a nice day
The pleasure of your company

side two:

The best things in life are free
Some sunny day
Bon vivant
Good companions
Razzle dazzle
The good old times
That's what life is all about (reprise)

Second Album (untitled)

side one:

I got rhythm
Something to remember you by
Looking at you
Send in the clowns
Cabaret
My heart stood still
Hello, Dolly

side two:

Heat wave
How are things in Glocca Morra?
Thou swell
I'll never fall in love again
Yours sincerely
With a song in my heart
Great day

LESLIE GAYLOR informs us that the recording of "That's what life is all about" is being issued on a 45 rpm 'single' which should be available by the time Bing returns to Great Britain to record the Parkinson Show.

ERIC AND BING ON RADIO NOTTINGHAM

Having spread the good word about his unforgettable experience in meeting Bing at Chappells, ERIC CROWDER was invited to participate in what proved to be a most commendable interview on BBC Radio Nottingham. The interview utilised Bing's recordings of "The very thought of you" and "Too marvellous for words" (both played in full) and Eric made doubly sure that the ICC came in for its full share of publicity, for which we are extremely grateful! Extracts from the interview are presented below ...

Interviewer: "As you might guess, Bing's still got an awful lot of fans, and one in particular is Eric Crowder who is the Regional Secretary of the International Crosby Circle, and a very special fan he is too, for he was invited to attend Bing's recent recording session in London and to meet the great man in person...."

"Did Bing come up to your expectations?"

ERIC: He certainly did. I had expected so much but quite honestly he was more than I expected - the man was absolutely fantastic. It was just unbelievable.

"Is he a very genuine person, or is he unapproachable like you would expect a star of his calibre to be?"

ERIC: Well, contrary to these superstars, Bing is most co-operative with his fan club, and I'm fortunate to be a member of one, and I think the proof of this is the fact that we got to these recording sessions, because the music world - television, reporters, the lot - were all trying to get there, but United Artists insisted on a very tight security. However, Bing insisted that a few of his long life friends should be allowed into the studio.

"Why do you think he decided to come all the way over to England to record these two albums?"

ERIC: Basically, he was being pressed in the States to do it, because of his 50 years of recording. As well as this, Johnny Mercer had recently been in London and made a recording or two with Pete Moore and Ken Barnes, and Bing had obviously heard these and was very keen on Pete Moore's work. As well as this, Leslie Gaylor, one of our publicity officers, mentioned the fact to the BBC. As a result of this, they went over on a business trip and visited Bing, and played him one or two of the records, and he was so impressed with the orchestrations that he decided to come over - and of course he's always said that London is his favourite city.

"What was he like in the studio ... is his voice still up to it after his operation?"

ERIC: Well that's the most amazing thing about it - as a keen fan I must admit that in recent years his range has been rather lacking on the top notes, and his accompaniments have been rather poor - I think he agrees on this - but since his operation his voice seems to have improved. In fact his range is greater, he can sustain the higher notes longer - and the man's absolutely fantastic.

"What does he actually do when he first gets into the studio? Does he have to rehearse with the band or does he just walk up to the microphone and sing the song, straight off, first time?"

ERIC: I'm glad you've asked me that. Bing's been reputed, for many years, to be one of the fastest recording artistes in the business, and I was fortunate enough to be in the studio and saw this with my own eyes. Ken Barnes, the producer, was absolutely amazed. Bing's average 'take' on any song was only three times, and this is quite phenomenal, and especially at his age!

"Did he give you the impression of being at all nervous in the studio?"

ERIC: (laughing) Well, let's put it this way - he had an old battered hat on the back of his head and an open-neck shirt, and casualness is his nature, he makes everyone so at ease and everyone that works with him thinks he's

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 14)

 FRANK MURPHY, 32 Ferndale Avenue, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear, NE28 7NE,
 offers the following SOUVENIR SET of seven matt finish postcard photo-
 graphs, commemorating Bing's February 1975 recording session in Great
 Britain ...

- (1) Bing and Ken Barnes, during the recording of "Bon vivant".
- (2) Bing and Pete Moore at studio microphone.
- (3) Bing and Frank Murphy (arm around shoulder).
- (4) Bing and studio manager.
- (5) Bing with Reg Bristo, Bob Roberts and Leslie Gaylor.
- (6) Bing and Frank Murphy (shaking hands).
- (7) Bing singing at microphone.

Price: £1.80p per set (overseas members UK equivalent). Available now.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ KEEPING TRACK @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

BERT BISHOP, COLIN PUGH and JOHN BASSETT review
 the latest record releases featuring Bing...

Collectors were recently taken for a ride by the announced release of a track from that elusive film soundtrack, "THE ROMANTIC RIVALS". As it happens, the so-called 'duet' between Bing and Russ Columbo turned out to be an edited combination of their individual commercial recordings of "Goodnight Sweetheart". The BBC's faked duet of "Sweet and Lovely" was similarly contrived and, if anything, more cleverly executed. Surely the producers of this album (of which we are not at liberty to publish full details) didn't for one moment think we could be fooled that easily? To make matters worse, the same LP (supposedly containing authentic film soundtrack material) used the commercial recording of "Three Little Words" to illustrate "CHECK AND DOUBLE CHECK". The soundtrack is certainly not unobtainable, as we have possessed a dubbing for many years which happens to be much clearer than the inferior quality commercial track used on the LP. We also suspect that the 'soundtrack' of "A Bench in the Park" is not what it seems. With so many 'red herrings' on one album, can we honestly believe the authenticity of "The Stein Song" from "TWO PLUS FOURS"? We'd like to have some confirmation of this particular item! All in all, rather a disappointing album.

We are indebted to Barry Underwood, Ken Brown and Neville Jarrett for pointing out two errors in our review of MGM's "THE SPECIAL MAGIC OF BING CROSBY" in "BING"-37. Firstly, the number should end with 101 (not 001 as printed), and secondly, the song "I've Got Five Dollars" can be found on side one, thus bringing the total number of tracks to 12. Since the original release of this album on HMV as "BING SINGS WHILST BREGMAN SWINGS", many re-issues and overseas equivalents have omitted one or two tracks from the full 1956 session of one dozen songs. MGM's latest presentation of all 12 tracks obviously caught us off-guard! So in answer to Ken Brown's query, I'm afraid you haven't got a rare collectors' item in your possession insofar as this disc is concerned!

As we 'go to press' we learn that the 7-LP package from 'World Records' is on the verge of being released. Over 100 tracks are included but we fear that many of them have been re-issued time and time again. However, it's worth keeping a look-out for - likewise, our review of the set in the next edition.

Apart from the lucky few who were present at some of Bing's recording sessions, collectors everywhere must surely be anxious to hear how he is sounding in this his 50th year of recording. We should not have to wait long for it is almost a certainty that United Artists will be releasing a 45 rpm single featuring the

'title' track, "That's What Life Is All About". No news of the back-up track as of the time of writing but the record is expected to be released prior to the proposed "PARKINSON" show on which, it has been suggested, Bing will be guesting and on which he will give us a preview of some of his newly recorded songs by actually singing on the show. A release date for the record is not actually known but June/July would be a favourable time. It is stressed here that once the single has been released as much 'air time' should be given to it as possible so that when the LP of that tune is released the general public will be familiar with at least the title tune. This is where we can all do our bit - by writing in to the various disc-jockeys - especially those who are favourably disposed towards Bing.

Previously mentioned, but without details, is the LP "DICK POWELL AND BING CROSBY". Full information is now to hand, and the LP is available through the usual import sources. 12" US WIMP (Amalgamated) BCDP 194850.

Side 1. Opening bars of "Where the blue of the night"

Bing and Ken Carpenter dialogue
 "Life is so peculiar" (Bing)
 "Harbour lights" (Bing)
 Bing introduces Dick Powell
 Bing and Dick Powell dialogue
 "Play a simple melody" (Bing and Dick)
 "I only have eyes for you" (Bing and Dick)
 "You must have been a beautiful baby" (Bing and Dick)
 "Jeepers, creepers" (Bing and Dick)
 "Lullaby of Broadway" (Bing and Dick)
 "Thanks a million" (Bing and Dick)
 "Autumn leaves" (Bing)

Side 2. Opening bars of "Where the blue of the night"

Bing and Ken Carpenter dialogue
 "Love is so terrific" (Bing)
 "Saturday date" (Bing and Gloria Woods)
 Bing introduces Dick Powell
 Bing and Dick Powell dialogue
 "I only have eyes for you" (Bing and Dick)
 "With plenty of money and you" (Dick Powell)
 "You must have been a beautiful baby" (Bing and Dick)
 "Jeepers, creepers" (Bing and Dick)
 "Shuffle off to Buffalo" (Bing and Dick)
 "Thanks a million" (Bing and Dick)
 "But beautiful" (Bing)
 "Story of Sorrento" (Bing and Gloria Woods)

From the album number, BCDP 194850, it can be taken to refer to the two artists by their initials and to give the two years that are involved - 1948 and 1950. Though the sleeve doesn't state the fact it is known that side 1 is the Chesterfield show of 8th November 1950, and that side 2 is the Philco show of 31st March 1948.

The sleeve features inset photographs of the head of each of the artistes on a drawn-in picture which shows Bing seated at a piano looking up toward Dick Powell, who is standing and holding what might be a microphone or a small musical instrument. Bing on the left; Dick on the right. The combined picture is enclosed within a large circle. Wimp's 'frog' trademark is in a small circle to the top left, whilst at the top right are the words 'Recorded live before a selected audience on two separate evenings. Bing and Dick together on LP for the very first time'. The main sleeve colour is black on pale green - but some issues may have different colours; a feature of Amalgamated!

Another overseas release is the 12" Belgian MCA 4C056-95717, "SEPTEMBER 1944". Side one, second track features Bing and the Andrews Sisters with Vic Schoen's

orchestra with the 1944 recording of Cole Porter's out-of-character hit song, "Don't fence me in". The remainder of the content is non-Bing, and no other details are to hand.

Catch-me-if-you-can might be said of the Triple B T-1001 "ROBERTO CLEMENTO MEMORIAL ALBUM". Bing does several minutes of a musically accompanied tribute to the ball-player in this essentially American oriented record. Apparently there has been a problem between the Pirates Football Club and the company who produced the record. As a result of this the LP has been withdrawn - officially. Anyone who has been able to latch on to a copy or is able to find one still on the shelves can consider themselves very fortunate. One of those real 'toughies' for the dedicated collector who must have 'em all! And the best of luck!

BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING
 BING BING
 BING * * * * *
 BING * YOU LUCKY PEOPLE, YOU! *
 BING * * * * *
 BING
 BING Something in excess of 20 new members join our ranks with
 BING the appearance of this edition, and it won't be long before
 BING many of them are striving to obtain back-numbers of "BING"
 BING to see what they've been missing! Early issues ("BING"-1
 BING appeared in February 1966) are about as rare as hens' teeth
 BING and we do not keep stocks at H.Q. However, an advert placed
 BING in 'CROSBY SHOPPE' may bring a certain amount of success -
 BING so it's worth a try.
 BING Our 38 issues to date are considered by many to be a
 BING veritable goldmine of information appertaining to every
 BING aspect of Bing's life and times (we'll go along with that!)
 BING and it is our proud boast that "BING" is the finest magazine
 BING of its kind - dedicated to the greatest of them all and the
 BING luckiest admirers in the world!
 BING
 BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING BING

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ HE'S STILL NUMBER ONE @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

writes BARRY FREESTONE

It seems to me, after reading the past six issues of the magazine, that the same argument keeps being repeated - 'When was Bing at his best?' - but I thought that you might care to hear the views of an 18 year old member. Firstly, Bing still sings great but it has been nearly 19 years since he had a million selling disc. In my opinion, this in itself means very little - for example, an inferior song such as "Swinging on a star" sold a million, along with really great numbers. I think Bing was at his best, vocally, in the early '30's. The June to October 1933 sessions with Jimmy Grier showed Bing's voice to be in great shape. Who can deny that, after hearing him hit those high notes on numbers such as "I've got to pass your house" and "The last round-up". It seems to me that Bing's voice changed all at once (can anyone explain this?) between the titles "Without a word of warning" and "We'll rest at the end of the trail", even though Bing was only 34 in both cases. Compare the 1931 and 1945 recordings of "Where the blue of the night" and notice how superior the earlier version is. Although post-1935 recordings were far from inferior. There were 'greats' such as "Birth of the blues" and "You keep coming back like a song" (my own particular favourite). Even in the 1950's, Bing proved himself time and time again with titles such as "Stranger in Paradise" - far superior to Tony Bennett's rendering.

(CONTINUED ON
 PAGE 30)

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ CELLULOID CROSBY @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

by KEITH PARKINSON

The film questionnaires from the Christmas 1974 issue have been arriving over the last few months and the results are shown below:

1. What is your favourite Bing Crosby film?
 HOLIDAY INN 102 votes
 BIRTH OF THE BLUES 84 "
 BLUE SKIES 50 "
2. What is your favourite Bing Crosby film song?
 MY HEART AND I 60 votes
 IF I HAD MY WAY 57 "
 WHITE CHRISTMAS 56 "
3. Who is your favourite Bing Crosby co-star?
 Male: BOB HOPE 35 votes
 FRED ASTAIRE 29 "
 Female: MARY MARTIN 17 "
 INGRID BERGMAN 9 "
4. Which Bing film disappointed you most?
 ROAD TO HONG KONG 18 votes
5. Excluding Bing, who is your favourite actor?
 GARY COOPER 13 votes
6. Who is your favourite actress?
 MARY MARTIN 8 votes

Only about 10% of readers are still regular picturegoers which accounts for a strong bias amongst voters in respect of Crosby films made over a quarter of a century ago, whilst the Crosby films that you found disappointing were almost all made after 1950. So what has been established? Not much that we didn't already know. The more songs Bing sings in a film the more popular you found the film. Whether another questionnaire in five years' time will find that tastes have changed remains to be seen. Ken Brown wrote, "...to choose just three favourite films was an almost impossible task" and Frank Ashurst probably summed it up for a lot of people with his comment, "I could do the whole thing again a few times and have a different answer every time". You will have noticed that tastes were so varied for questions 3 to 6 that no one person or film established a definite favourite or otherwise. I enjoyed analysing your answers - thanks to everyone who completed the questionnaire.

The Candid Movie Star Gallery of New York originated a Bing Crosby 'Picture of the month' scheme a few years ago, which was the subject of discussion in this magazine at the time. I obtained some photographs of Bing from them to find that most were new to me, although all of them were obviously posed. Most of the candid shots I have seen of Bing were taken by non-professional photographers and Bing goes to great lengths to preserve the privacy of himself and his family. A truly candid shot of Bing would need to show him standing on his head eating an ice cream cone - and such a photograph existed in the collection of the late Hymie Fink. Fink used to earn a living in Hollywood as a freelance photographer. His aim used to be to photograph film stars when they were off guard and then sell the resultant snap shots to a newspaper or a magazine. In an interview he is quoted as saying:

"The great majority of movie people are wonderful. Some of the stars, though, are not too co-operative. Bing Crosby has a habit of posing for a shot after much urging and then walking away just as the camera-man is about to snap the picture".

I was pleased to read reports in the last issue of "BING" which left no doubt that he was extremely co-operative in London in February - particularly for your Editor!

"TIME" magazine used to have a policy of featuring a well known Hollywood star on its cover with a feature on the star appearing in the magazine. The policy was to attract the casual news stand customer who would buy the magazine because of its apparently popular appeal and then become a regular subscriber. Bing never made it as a "TIME" cover profile, although many of his lesser known contemporaries found it gave them a boost from a career and status point of view. "TIME" attempted to balance its reportage by assigning a journalist to interview the personality and then to obtain comment from people who knew the star well. After Frank Sinatra's career was given an uplift in the early 'fifties following his dramatic role "FROM HERE TO ETERNITY", he was thought to be a suitable subject. Ezra Goodman, "TIME"s Hollywood correspondent, was assigned to the article but found Sinatra extremely uncooperative and Goodman had to resort to extracting comment from as many of Sinatra's friends as possible. Bing is reported as offering the following information:

"Sinatra is quite a fellow, a paradoxical cuss. Without taking any bows or making a big fuss about it, he goes quietly about doing many wonderful things for people who are in need of a little help. He can be generous, kind and completely selfless. And then he'll turn around and do something so inexplicably thoughtless, so unnecessary, that you wonder if it's the same fellow. I think, secretly, he's always nurtured a childish desire to be a 'hood'. But having too much class, too much sense to go that route, he gets his kicks barking at people - newsmen, photographers and so forth. Talent? He's loaded! It's no surprise to me that he's such a good actor. Any singer worthy of the name is acting when he sings a song - ergo. He's a good actor. Great host, this fellow. Pure hell with spaghetti, meat balls, and that two-day sauce. But you have to listen to Puccini records all night, which is all right with me".

I have detailed Bing's representation in Hollywood cartoons on two previous occasions. In issue 35 of "BING" the meetings of Popeye the sailor and Crosby the crooner were chronicled, whilst in an issue of the now defunct "CROSBY COLLECTOR" I related the story of the cartoon "Don't Hook Now", a golfing 'short' which featured Crosby and Hope. I am not attempting to compile details of all the cartoons in which Bing is represented but Warner Brothers produced "What's Up Doc?" (they also used the title for a popular feature comedy in 1971) which had Bing alongside Edward G. Robinson, Jack Benny and Al Jolson, and "Curtain Razor" with Bing, Sinatra and Jolson being featured. Another Bing cartoon was "Hollywood Steps Out", which was a 'thirties colour cartoon showing caricatures of Hollywood stars such as Clark Gable, the Three Stooges and Humphrey Bogart. A few brief extracts from this 'short' were included in the compilation film "Brother Can You Spare A Dime" and I was impressed by the voice imitations on the cartoon's soundtrack. "Brother Can You Spare A Dime" was a 109 minute film shown on BBC-2 on March 23rd and given a theatrical premiere in London four days later. The film's two producers, Sandford Lieberman and David Puttnam persuaded the BBC to contribute £10,000 towards the cost of making the film on the understanding that the usual five year wait before a film was shown on British television was ignored. A further Crosby contribution to the film was Bing's commercial recordings of "Brother can you spare a dime" and "Where the blue of the night" (shown as "When the blue...." in the credits) which were on the soundtrack as voice over totally unrelated newsreel material. The film itself was a fascinating document of America from the Depression to the bombing of Pearl Harbour and it deserves to succeed if only because the Odeon in St. Martin's Lane, London, is admitting moviegoers to matinee performances at the 1930s price of 5p.

Some songs are forever associated with a particular performer. Anyone other than Jolson singing "Sonny boy" sounds wrong, and "Jimmy, the well dressed man" must be regarded as the exclusive vocal 'property' of Durante. I had connected "The Bells of St. Mary's" with Bing for nearly 20 years. The film

itself helped to create the illusion that the only possible version of the title song was Bing's, and I always had a mental picture of him singing with a clerical collar hugging his adam's apple. Then in 1964 I happened to hear an obscure folk group, the Trunkells, perform what they introduced as "The Bells" on a set of handbells to the tune of "The Bells of St. Mary's". It was a charming, distinctive sound and I realised that the song itself was capable of being adapted without inviting unfavourable comparison with the until then definitive Crosby version. Not long afterwards I chanced upon an album by Slim Dusty, the Australian country type singer who had a hit with "A pub with no beer" about 15 years ago. The listing on the record sleeve of the title "The Bells of St. Mary's" stood out amongst songs such as "I'm going back again to Yarrawonga" and "Oh Sydney, I love you" that I just had to buy the disc to see what Dusty and his Bushlanders achieved by way of vocal interpretation. Surprise, surprise - a gentle version uncharacteristic of the other tracks on the album and completely different to Bing's version. The story ends for the time being with my purchase last week of an album in the 'Atlantic Masters' series by the late Clyde McPhatter. I had seen McPhatter in Manchester in 1959 and the memory of his rhythmic vocal style justified buying the disc. It's hard to believe, but his treatment of "The Bells of St. Mary's" on the disc was again totally different to any other version I had heard. McPhatter was originally a member of the coloured vocal group the Drifters and his crystal clear falsetto steers the song through a rhythm and blues treatment of what I used to think was a Crosby-only standard. Even so, I promise not to be corrupt enough to acknowledge that there is anyone else able to interpret "Where the blue of the night". (A brief account of the origin of "The Bells of St. Mary's" appeared in "BING" magazine some time ago).

About 20 years ago the film weekly "PICTUREGOER" ran a three part article on Bing. See if you can guess the author's identity from the following extracts:

"We've had a lot of wonderful times together, but one of the most hilarious, to me, was during the Victory Caravan in Des Moines. There was a huge parade in 1943 and Laurel and Hardy, Cary Grant, Groucho Marx and others were riding in it. They were all sitting up on the back of the car - and being recognised, cheered and applauded. Nobody noticed Bing because he was sitting down in the car. After a while, I heard a big yell of recognition. I turned around - and there was Bing standing up in the car with his coat open, quietly showing off his tie and bowing and smiling politely to the crowds. It was typical of someone in our business: nobody recognised Bing so he got up and started showing off his tie. Anything to get into the act! As a matter of fact, that was the only reason he was with us in the first place - because he couldn't stand to be left out! We were in Philadelphia when Bing called up and said, "Hey, what are you doing on that show?" I said, "Oh, we're just having the ball of all time!" We had our own planes and trains and everything. Bing said, "Well, how much fun is it really?" I told him only a little bit of what was going on, but I could sense his itching at the other end of the telephone. When I had finished, he complained, "You can't do this to me! I'm joining you in Chicago". That's typical of Bing. He would rather laugh than do anything.

I remember one day when the big brass convened at Paramount studios to discuss Bing's new contract. There had been a reshuffle and some of the men were meeting for the first time. One of the myths I'd like to explode is that Bing is withdrawn, is shy with strangers and doesn't easily make friends. Bing might have known the studio brass all his life the way he told them what he wanted - a thirty year contract at double his old salary whether he worked or not, two-way helicopter service between his shack in Holmby Hills and the studio, and drilling rights on the back lot. When Bing had finished, there wasn't a

dry eye or a stranger in the room. They met his demands. When he left, they were all his friends and all biting their nails with emotion".

And the writer? Who else but Bob Hope.

BOOK REVIEW OF GENERAL INTEREST TO RECORD COLLECTORS ...

A fascinating book (non-Bing) has been published which will appeal to those of us who appreciate music (popular and/or classical) - and surely that description takes into account the entire membership of the ICC! It is called "THE DIRECTORY OF TUNES" by Denys Parsons, and published by Spencer Brown & Co. (£6.00). It is basically a dictionary of musical themes which enables you to find the title of any tune, provided you can correctly hum the opening few notes. The method is extraordinarily simple, being based on the premise that the sequence of notes in any tune must eventually diverge from the sequence in any other tune. The compiler has found this to be almost invariably the case within the first 15 notes. Either each successive note in a tune goes up the scale from its predecessor, or it goes down, or it repeats. This gives the simple 3-letter code of U (up), D (down), R (repeat) and this is the alphabetico-arrangement of the directory. So to build up the code of the tune you can hum in order to identify it, you write down an asterisk for the first note, followed by each appropriate letter of U, D or R. Having achieved, for example, *UUURRRDRURURDRD, you look up this sequence in the directory where you find that your tune is the theme from the 4th movement of Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik". Naturally, you have to be able to hum your tune correctly, otherwise you are lost! There are over 14,000 entries in the book, so never again need you be stuck for any particular title.

To end on a Bing note, "White Christmas", for example, would be found using the code of *UDDUUUU. Get it?

"WEEKEND" magazine for the week 30th April - 6th May featured three pages of write-up and pictures depicting 'before and after' poses of stars famed for their "scalp doilies" - to use Bing's own description. Our Honorary President was shown, of course, along with Sinatra, Astaire, Wayne and others. Quite interesting!

ERIC AND BING ON RADIO NOTTINGHAM continued...

number one.

"What is it about Bing that's kept you such a faithful fan of his for so many years?"

ERIC: It's just something really unexplainable. He's just got that 'magic' something that in my opinion no-one else has got, and of course he's sustained it, and I even think he's improved on it now which is so amazing!

Interviewer: "If you're interested in joining the International Crosby Circle you can contact Eric Crowder at 2 Appledore Avenue in Wollaton, or you can get in touch with him by 'phone, Nottingham 285866. This puts you in touch with Eric, and through him, other Bing Crosby fans in the International Crosby Circle - and a great time Eric Crowder had in meeting his hero when he was at that recording session in London".

In view of Eric's sterling work in publicising the ICC, we have pleasure in appointing him PUBLICITY OFFICER for the Nottingham area.

A far cry from "Regional Secretary" but an important position nonetheless!

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ WHAT'S NEW? @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

by the EDITOR

We've been asked to give an indication of what you might expect to find under the Crosby section in your local record shop. It's more than likely, however, that the shop doesn't have a Crosby section to begin with, and you'll find it necessary to wade through scores of "POPULAR VOCALISTS - MALE" before you come upon anything by Bing. Taking Southend-on-Sea as an example, there are some six shops in the town with well-stocked record departments, but at the time of 'going to press' not one of them holds more than two Crosby LPs! The following list shows a few of the more recent albums which ought to be generally available ...

"WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS"
 "THE SPECIAL MAGIC OF BING CROSBY"
 "THE SPECIAL MAGIC OF BING AND LOUIS"
 "DAY DREAMING"
 "MR. CROSBY AND MR. MERCER"
 "WHITE CHRISTMAS" (formerly "Merry Christmas")
 "BING - A MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY"
 "CHRISTMAS WITH THE STARS"
 "THE BEST OF BING"
 "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT"
 "PAPER MOON"
 "BING CROSBY AT HIS EXTRA SPECIALE"
 "BING 'N BASIE"
 "THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES AND A CHRISTMAS STORY"
 "SING A RAINBOW"

Consider yourself lucky if you discover "THOROUGHLY MODERN BING" and "HEY JUDE/HEY BING!", particularly the former which found itself deleted only months after its initial appearance! Casting provincial shops to one side, if you're visiting London, be sure to head for the HMV Record Shop, 363 Oxford Street, W.1. for undoubtedly the best selection of Crosby material anywhere in the country. Look under 'Nostalgia' and 'Jazz' (Beiderbecke, etc.) in addition to Bing's rack, then if you're still solvent, stroll along to 'HARLEQUIN' in nearby New Bond Street - a small shop but with rarely seen Crosbyana in amongst its large selection of American imports. Two favourite haunts of your Editor and his wife!

We have always maintained that if you persistently hover round the Crosby rack in London's HMV shop, you'll finish up meeting at least 50 per cent of our UK membership. This thought-provoking item was recalled to mind by John Bignell's latest contribution:

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ LET'S ALL MEET AT HMV @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

by JOHN BIGNELL

I had an interesting experience a couple of months ago whilst on a record shop jaunt in town. At the Crosby section in the HMV emporium in Oxford Street the chap next to me was looking over several albums most of which we have possessed for some time now - such as the 'Totem' albums of Crosby shows with Hope and Jolson, etc. Not wishing to let the fellow go away missing a rare treat, I politely said, "Excuse me, but I can thoroughly recommend those 'Totem' albums if you are undecided - they're first rate". The chap smiled knowingly and replied, "Yes, they are good - I've got most of them, and others, on tape!" From this opening, I went on to introduce myself as an ICC member, and he asked, "Is that Ralph Harding's society?" Brief explanations followed and it subsequently transpired that he once belonged to the now defunct ISCC. Even more interesting - his name is Stanley Cooper and, as many members will know, is a famous Opera singer who began by winning an amateur talent contest over 20 years ago imitating (yes, you've guessed it) Bing Crosby! He opened a carrier bag he was holding and it was full of tapes, mostly of Crosby tracks and shows, but before I could investigate further he had to take his leave, as it was early afternoon and he was on his way to a matinee.

An amusing incident on another trip occurred as I entered the excellent Dobell's Jazz Shop in Charing Cross Road. I was greeted most pleasingly by Bing singing "Jeepers Creepers" from the Bregman album. I mentioned jokingly to the bearded chap at the counter that it was very nice to have such a welcome as a member of the ICC, but that in my opinion the accompaniment was probably a little too strident to do Bing full justice. Imagine my temporary embarrassment when he replied, "It's the band that I like!" Come to think of it, this is logical - after all, it is a jazz shop and the only records of vocalists stocked are those on jazz albums!

(EDITOR's footnote: PHIL CLARKE asks if a regular rendezvous could be arranged for UK members 'down south' - preferably on a Sunday! Rather than have a southern contingent of Crosbyites gathered on the pavement outside HMV, perhaps one or two readers can put forward a few 'concrete' ideas? Write to Phil at 69 Walden Road, Stamshaw, Portsmouth, Hants.)

=====

THE NEW PAUL WHITEMAN ORCHESTRA

A brief review...

Even in this day and age, £2.50 seems an awful lot of money for one LP but that's what you'll have to pay if the following album takes your fancy. It's called "RUNNIN' WILD" and features 12 tracks played by the 'New Paul Whiteman Orchestra' which found itself mentioned in the last edition of this magazine. Housed in an attractive sleeve showing the familiar 'Potato Head' emblem (in colour) superimposed over a black-and-white studio photograph of the band, it contains five of Bing's original numbers given the 'New Rhythm Boys' treatment. The label and catalogue number are ARGO ZDA 167 and the full selection of titles are as follows:

Runnin' wild
Reaching for someone
China boy
You took advantage of me
I've found a new baby
Singin' the blues

Back in your own back yard
'Tain't so, honey, 'tain't so
When
There ain't no sweet man
Louisiana
Nobody's sweetheart

Various tracks have already been heard on BBC Radio 2 and in this reviewer's opinion the quality of recording and performance are first class.

=====

THE "BING" TAPE SERVICE

by BOB ROBERTS

Operating in conjunction with the ICC, the "BING" Tape Service provides members with the opportunity of acquiring high-quality tapes ('open reel' or cassette) of virtually anything ever sung or spoken by Bing Crosby into a microphone during the course of his long and varied career. Strict legal copyright clauses are applicable to private tape recordings for obvious reasons but these special facilities are available via the ICC without offence to anyone.

All tape is fully guaranteed and recorded dual-track (if 'open reel!') at a choice of speed and spool size to suit the facilities of members. Delivery is usually within 21 days of receipt of order and payment.

Further information on material available can be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:-

BOB ROBERTS (ICC Publicity Officer)
"Bob's Stores"
56 Thorold Road
Chatham
Kent, England.

=====

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 CROSBYGRAPHY
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

DISCOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH conducted by the Editor

An interesting discovery has been made by your Editor regarding the 12th June 1956 recording of "Cheek to Cheek". According to the compilers of the "ROAD TO BING CROSBY" Discography, 'takes' for all issues are identical excepting Australian 'Verve' MGW 2020 which, for some unknown reason, consists of different 'takes' of "Cheek to Cheek", "The Blue Room" and "Mountain Greenery". This may well be so for the last two titles, but we can now reveal that the alternate 'take' of "Cheek to Cheek" was also issued on 7" UK EP HMV 7EG 8405.

Alternate 'take' notes are as follows:-

BR 20164 "CHEEK TO CHEEK"

Take 5 "...will carry me through up to heaven, I'm in heaven..."

Take ? "...that'll carry me through up to heaven, yes I'm in heaven..."

Take 5 "Oh I love to climb a mountain..."

Take ? "Oh I love to climb up a mountain..."

The unknown 'take' is the version thus issued on 7" UK EP HMV 7EG 8405 and 12" AU 'Verve' MGW 2020. As far as we know, all other issues contain Take 5.

"ROAD" revisionists please note!

In view of the above discovery, we checked a copy of 7" UK EP HMV 7EG 8475 to ascertain which 'take' of "Mountain Greenery" had been used. We were somewhat disappointed to find that this was the same 'take' as used on the 12" UK album and all subsequent re-issues!

BING CROSBY on USA 78's - Toward a 'skeletal' listing. Compiled by JIM HAYES.

(asterisked items denote 12" issues)

Banner	Brunswick				
33160	6090	6515			
33161	6120	6525			
33162	6140	6533			
33163	6145	6594			
33164	6169	6599			
33165	6179	6601			
33166	6200	6610			
33167	6203	6623	80047	1683-D	2171-D
33168	6226	6635	80055	1694-D	2223-D
33169	6240	6643	80056	1701-D	4301-M
33198	6248	6644	80057	1755-D	4302-M
33199	6259	6663	80058	1771-D	4303-M
33200	6268	6694	85001*	1773-D	4304-M
33201	6276	6695		1819-D	4305-M
33202	6285	6696	Clarion	1822-D	4417-M
33203	6306	6724	5476-C	1845-D	4418-M
	6320	6794		1851-D	4419-M
Biltmore	6329	6852	Columbia	1862-D	4420-M
1013	6351	6853	824-D	1877-D	4421-M
1017	6394	6854	1401-D	1945-D	4530-M
1029	6406	6936	1402-D	1974-D	4531-M
1030	6414	6953	1441-D	1993-D	4532-M
1031	6427	20102*	1444-D	2001-D	4533-M
1032	6454	20105*	1448-D	2010-D	38213
	6464	20106*	1455-D	2023-D	50070*
Bluebird	6472	20109*	1465-D	2047-D	50098*
B-7102	6477	80043	1491-D	2098-D	55003*
B-7118	6480	80044	1496-D	2163-D	
	6485	80045	1505-D	2164-D	
	6491	80046	1629-D	2170-D	

continued
overleaf

<u>Conqueror</u>	1451	3297	11007	18690	23650
8363	1462	3298	11008	18704	23655
8364	1483	3299	11009	18705	23661
8365	1518	3300	11010	18708	23678
8366	1554	3309	11011	18720	23679
8367	1565	3321	11012	18721	23680
8368	1616	3354	11013	18735	23681
8369	1648	3388	11014	18743	23686
8370	1649	3423	11015	18746	23716
8371	1794	3450	11016	18766	23739
8372	1819	3477	11017	18767	23745
8412	1845	3540	11018	18768	23754
8413	1874	3541	11019	18769	23777
8414	1887	3542	11020	18770	23778
8415	1888	3543	11021	18790	23779
8416	1933	3554	11022	18801	23784
8417	1934	3555	11023	18802	23786
9551	1960	3565	11024	18803	23787
9553	2001	3584	11025	18804	23788
9557	2123	3590	11026	18829	23789
	2147	3600	11027	18846	23804
<u>Decatur</u>	2200	3601	11028	18860	23814
505	2201	3602	11029	18866	23815
	2237	3603	11030	18887	23816
<u>Decca</u>	2257	3609	11031	18898	23819
100	2273	3614	11048	18912	23820
101	2289	3636	14500	19016	23821
179	2315	3637	14501	19017	23823
245	2316	3644	14517	19018	23840
309	2359	3689	14531	19019	23843
310	2360	3731	15027*	19020	23848
391	2374	3736	18278	19021	23849
392	2385	3797	18316	19022	23850
543	2400	3840	18354	19023	23885
547	2413	3856	18360	19024	23914
548	2447	3886	18371	19025	23915
616	2448	3887	18391	23277	23918
617	2494	3952	18424	23281	23954
621	2535	3965	18425	23350	23968
631	2626	3970	18426	23364	23969
756	2640	3971	18427	23379	23970
757	2641	4000	18429	23392	23971
791	2671	4033	18432	23410	23972
806	2676	4064	18510	23413	23975
870	2677	4065	18511	23417	23990
871	2678	4152	18513	23437	23999
880	2679	4162	18514	23457	24100
886	2680	4173	18531	23469	24101
905	2700	4183	18561	23482	24114
907	2775	4184	18564	23484	24144
912	2800	4193	18570	23495	24170
947	2874	4200	18580	23508	24200
948	2948	4201	18586	23510	24201
1044	2998	4249	18595	23530	24202
1175	2999	4339	18597	23547	24203
1184	3024	4343	18608	23569	24204
1185	3064	4367	18621	23579	24255
1186	3098	11000	18635	23580	24256
1201	3118	11001	18640	23581	24269
1210	3133	11002	18644	23636	24273
1234	3161	11003	18649	23646	24278
1301	3162	11004	18658	23647	24279
1375	3182	11005	18675	23648	24282
1376	3257	11006	18686	23649	24283

24292	25025	27111	28255	40091	2967
24293	25052	27112	28256	40181	2968
24294	25091	27117	28261	74281	2969
24295	25093	27143	28265	88050	2970
24379	25127	27158	28303	88089	2971
24404	25128	27159	28319	88143	2993
24413	25129	27173	28419	88152	2994
24433	25130	27219	28463	90013*	2995
24471	25148	27228	28470	90014*	2996
24476	25185	27229	28511	90046	2997
24481	25186	27230	28513		2998
24508	25187	27231	28514	<u>Diva</u>	
24515	25188	27232	28515	3418-G	<u>Parlophon</u>
24524	25193	27241	28581		PNY 41228(?)
24525	25228	27249	28610	<u>Harmony</u>	
24526	25229	27250	28683	1428-H	<u>Perfect</u>
24532	25230	27263	28733	1007	13034
24541	25231	27264	28743	1008	23035
24542	25232	27275	28805		13036
24544	25233	27276	28814	<u>Melotone</u>	13037
24559	25259	27277	28955	M-13127	13038
24595	25281	27404	28963	M-13128	13039
24609	25285	27441	28969	M-13129	13040
24612	25299	27442	29024	M-13130	13041
24616	25345	27443	29035	M-13131	13042
24618	25346	27461	29054	M-13132	13043
24635	25347	27477	29144	M-13133	13050
24658	25366	27478	29147	M-13134	13051
24659	25367	27483	29212	M-13135	13052
24670	25368	27500	29226*	M-13136	13053
24677	25369(?)	27505	29251	M-13165	13054
24696	25370(?)	27508	29341	M-13166	13055
24702	25371	27536	29342	M-13167	
24703	25372(?)	27550	29357	M-13168	<u>Romeo</u>
24709	25380	27551	29376	M-13169	2336
24710	25390	27553	29409	M-13170	2337
24718	25399	27554	29410		2338
24721	25400	27577	29483	<u>Odeon</u>	2339
24798	25406	27588	29493	ONY 41228	2340
24800	25407	27589	29568		2341
24824	25408	27595	29634	<u>Okeh</u>	2342
24826	25409	27605	29636	2830	2343
24827	25410	27606	29777	2834	2344
24833	25415	27623	29790	2835	2345
24846	25424	27631	29817	2845	2367
24853	25425	27653	29850	2867	2368
24863	25430	27667	29981	2868	2369
24875	25492	27678	30023	2869	2370
24876	25495	27679	30082	2870	2371
24942	25496	27743	30120	2877	2372
25000	25497	27768	30123	2878	
25001	25501	27801	30126	2879	<u>Sentry</u>
25002	25502	27830	30555	4522	4005
25003	25503	27831	30828	40979	4008
25009	25504	27852	40000	41181	4010
25010	25520	27934	40007	41188	
25011	25540	27951	40008	41228	<u>Silvertone</u>
25012	25643	28048	40012		8367
25013	25661	28061	40035	<u>Oriole</u>	
25020	25665	28195	40038	2962	<u>Temple</u>
25021	26281	28210	40039	2963	529
25022	27013	28217	40040	2964	4008
25023	27018	28238	40041	2965	
25024	27019	28254	40090	2966	(?) = presumed never issued

<u>Velvet Tone</u>	21103	22618	27687	2878
2536-V	21104	22691	27688	2879
	21218	22700	35934*	4522
<u>Victor</u>	21240	22701	35992*	
20418	21274	24078	36186*	
20508	21302	24240	42-0014	
20513	21315	24349	42-0031	
20627	21365	25076		
20646	21389	25249	<u>Vocalion</u>	
20627	21398	25280	2830	
20683	21431	25366	2834	
20751	21438	25368	2835	
20783	21453	25369	2845	
20828	21464	25370	2867	
20882	21678	25675	2868	
20883	22528	26415	2869	
20885	22561	27685	2870	
20973	22580	27686	2877	

The following corrections to "THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY" have kindly been supplied by Colin Pugh ...

page 13 14 October "You must have been a beautiful baby"
Amend master number to read: C 91511 (both takes)

14 October "Old folks"
Amend master number to read: C 91512 (both takes)

14 October "My reverie"
Amend master number to read: C 91513 (both takes)

A completely revised DISCOGRAPHY will eventually be made available but in the meantime members can keep their own copies fully up-to-date by making the necessary amendments shown in most issues of "BING". We are grateful to Colin Pugh for the page-by-page examination he is currently undertaking for us.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ BING TOPICS FROM HULL @ ...or HIGH WATER! by ALF FARROW
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

I have copious notes about Bing's appearances on "GRANDSTAND" and "PEBBLE MILL AT ONE" but as they were extensively covered in the last issue of the magazine, - 'nuff said!

I enjoyed these TV appearances of Bing so much that I wrote to Frank Bough, Pete Murray and David Dimbleby and asked them for their impressions of the Maestro. And I enclosed a S.A.E. in each letter, but so far only one has bothered to reply, namely Frank Bough. And he says (I quote) "Meeting Bing Crosby was a rare experience - off camera he was exactly the same, charming and courteous. It was interesting that people came from all over the building when they knew he was in the Grandstand studio. He was applauded in a really warm, affectionate manner when he left". Thank you, Frank Bough.

Of course, Pete Murray and David Dimbleby were on radio, i.e. "OPEN HOUSE" - but I wonder what happens to S.A.E.'s when they aren't used!

In a recent "THERE GOES THAT SONG AGAIN" programme which is screened during the afternoon (when we retired folk and shift workers, etc. can view!), a small extract of "I love you, Samantha" was played (Kenny Ball's version, I believe) and David Jacobs, Marion Montgomery, Millicent Martin and Roy Castle were asked by Steve Race who used to play that tune as their signature tune. No one knew except Jacobs because it was his signature tune in his earlier 'DJ' days. He explained that he used the "HIGH SOCIETY" version for his programmes, and Bing had once said to him in that familiar deep voice (Jacobs impersonates) "Oh!

you're the guy who fades out my "Samantha" before my solo?"

Johnny Mathis, appearing on "PEBBLE MILL AT ONE" said that Bing is his favourite singer and he hopes that he will be around as long as the "Old Groaner". He also said that he thinks Bing is singing as well now as he ever has. Well, we shall see about that when the two albums are released!

Des O'Connor did a commendable job in singing Bing's "Prisoner of love", and I think that if they ever make a film of Bing's life, Des would be my choice to play the lead role! Listen sometime and see how he really gets down there! (EDITOR's interruption: Surely any film of Bing's life would utilise his original recordings on the soundtrack? But, of course, Alf may be referring to Des O'Connor's speaking voice).

I have taken a fancy to reading Catherine Cookson's books lately. They are all about life in Geordieland and in one I read this week mention was made of you-know-who! "...as he made his way along the snow-laden streets he hummed a snatch of Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas'". Maybe Frank Murphy knows something about this?

Popping up in the script of TV programmes seems to be getting quite prevalent for Bing's name these days. "ARE YOU BEING SERVED" (a show about a department store) favoured Bing recently with several lines of humorous comments referring to him, and ending with the 'boss' saying, "I don't think that even Bing could make any difference to the sales of this store". I don't believe that because just his presence alone would draw potential buyers!

Well, folks, on 1st June my wife and I are flying to Switzerland for a week's holiday - that's if we're not restricted by the disastrous fall of the pound, of late!

Anyway, all the best to you - particularly those who are also contemplating well earned holidays. Cheers for now!

=====

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT ...from the EDITOR

=====

It is with deep regret that as from this issue of "BING", I find it necessary to relinquish my position as Editor of the magazine. The reason for this decision stems from the fact that I am allergic to stencils! This allergy has gradually developed over the years and takes the form of an eczema on my hands. It is something I have battled with for longer than I care to remember, without much success, and it rears its ugly head each time I commence work on a new issue. I have decided, therefore, that the best course of action I can take is to resign from my position. I will continue to work on the ICC's discographical projects, however, but it will not be possible for me to undertake the stencilling as I have done in the past. A sad state of affairs but I'm sure that members will agree that one's health must take priority when such a situation develops. My grateful thanks are extended to everyone for their help and support since I took over from Frank Murphy in 1970, exactly 18 issues ago.

ALL CONTRIBUTORS TO "BING"-39 ARE ASKED, AS
A TEMPORARY MEASURE, TO FORWARD THEIR 'COPY'
TO REG BRISTO, UNTIL SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS
CAN BE MADE FOR THE TYPING OF THE SEPTEMBER
ISSUE.

=====

NEW APPOINTMENT: Edward Hale (London) has been appointed publicity officer in place of Lee Argent (Basildon) who left the ICC earlier this year.


~~~~~  
 BING ON THE BOX  
 ~~~~~

reviewed by BERT BISHOP

In what will prove to be a big year for Bing, and befitting his stature as an artiste, he has been seen and heard in a variety of programmes on both television and radio during the preceding quarter. Other artistes and film stars have their seasons, but as the months flick by our ubiquitous Bing continues to command attention by his omnipresence. Can there be a week go by without his name appearing in one or both of the weekly television and radio periodicals? Hardly!

The most satisfying experience, for both Bing fans and the general public, must have been in the further screening of the film, "HIGH SOCIETY". Without doubt, a great favourite among the non-dedicated - didn't we have David Dimbleby admitting on "OPEN HOUSE" that his family took a holiday from work every time it was screened. Compulsive family viewing indeed!

What made it more interesting on this occasion - it was televised by London ITV from 7 - 9 p.m. on the evening of Tuesday, 8th April - was the fact that just two weeks beforehand the original film version of the Phillip Barry play on which it was based, "THE PHILADELPHIA STORY", was featured in the BBC-2 season of Cary Grant films. Despite the fact that "HIGH SOCIETY" was a great box-office success most professional film critics, and not a few others, considered that it was a travesty of Barry's play and not a patch on the first straight film version. Here, then, was an opportunity to make an appraisal in the light of close proximity in time. Having been watching the Cary Grant season with great pleasure, I found that his role of C. K. Dexter-Haven rather disappointing, and I am surprised to learn that Grant chose this role in the film in preference to that of the reporter, Macauley (Mike) Connor. Although Cary Grant called the tune, and even won an Academy Award for his performance, in my opinion this was Katherine Hepburn and James Stewart's film all along the line. Their acting was faultless, even if one wondered how such a nice guy as James Stewart could have been working for such a disreputable magazine as 'SPY'.

Bing's role as Dexter was built up it seemed, and I'm sure that he had more dialogue. The fact that he had five songs to sing obviously kept him in front of the cameras a great deal more - his dilettante portrayal reflecting the oft-times attitude of the score's composer, Cole Porter. A very satisfying performance from Bing in a role which was tailor made for him - or is it that by his acting he conveyed that impression? That may well be.

Having already written a lengthy synopsis of the film for "BING"-25 (Feb. 1972), I welcomed this occasion to look from a new slant at this highly successful MGM production which has given so many people so much pleasure.

Meanwhile, BBC Radio-2 has come up with another 13 part weekly series on a great artiste - "THE FRED ASTAIRE STORY" - and fortunately for us Bing has been referred to and featured in several episodes. In conjunction with the Saturday 12.02 - 1.00 p.m. programmes and the short season of Astaire/Rogers films, the BBC have also published a 68 page souvenir booklet of handsome, colourful and informative proportions. In it is to be found a photograph of Bing and Fred doing their "A Couple of Song and Dance Men" routine from the film "HOLIDAY INN"; and also a quote by Bing. All of Fred's films are listed, complete with cast of each. At 50p it is a good buy.

The series began on 22nd March with a programme called "CURTAIN UP" - a broad outline of what was to follow in the next 12 weeks. David Niven narrates Benny Green's script, and in Part 1 he had just introduced Cyd Charisse telling of Cole Porter's predilection for Fred to introduce his songs when he went on to say:

Niven: "Now, when that kind of fame and adulation lands on your doorstep it can turn out to be quite something to live with; especially when it comes from people who are themselves acknowledged world champions. Having had a tribute to Fred's singing by a great dancer, like Cyd Charisse, how about a tribute to Fred's dancing by a great singer?"

BING: "As a dancing performer I think he's number one. The greatest that ever lived; and I don't see anybody coming up to that to touch him. He had an inherent genius - plus all of the hard work he did - he was indefatigable".

At which point a considerable part of the aforementioned song was featured, as taken from the commercial release.

Part 2, "LADY BE GOOD", had Bing relating a somewhat risque anecdote at that part of the narrative where the professional attraction of the title show was being discussed.

Niven: "One singer of the period who caught the show was Bing Crosby. At that time a band vocalist. And his recollections are generally backstage ones with particular reference to the comedian Walter Catlett".

BING: "Walter Catlett was a ribald sort of fellow - rough, tough - and they dressed together; and Fred was quite popular in social circles. Some of the grande dames used to come and catch the show and go upstairs in the dressing room and visit with him. One night, he'd finished the show, and a couple of these ladies - Mrs. Styvesant Peabody or something, and another lady - came up in the elevator to pay their regards - and Fred and Catlett were dressing together in their dressing room. Catlett was in bad humour - he'd been on the wagon for about a week and he wasn't feeling very well - a little testy - and one of the ladies, to make conversation - he had a bottle of milk there - she said, 'Mr. Catlett, however did you get a bottle of milk up here on the sixth floor of the theatre?' He says, 'I milked the wardrobe lady'. Ha! - and Fred went under the desk!"

Part 9, "I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO CHANGE MY PLAN", saw Fred at the crossroads in his filmic career - the Astaire/Rogers partnership had broken and a succession of lady partners followed, and though all delightful films, nothing seemed quite the same even though his movie commitments were still piling up - far ahead.

Niven: "The next two changed his life ... Astaire was to have the pleasure of two bonuses. One, a musical film with a leading lady he had worked with before, and the other, another musical film with one of the few personalities as exalted as Fred himself - Bing Crosby".

BING: "I'd been at Paramount for a while - made some movies; some musical films, and he'd been over at MGM, and I guess someone at the studio thought it would be a good idea to get a singer and a dancer together. Irving Berlin was going to do the score, and it was just based on a series of holidays. We were a vaudeville team and both in love with the same girl - a sister team - and we played on the same bill with them and there was a rivalry for the girl. Good natured rivalry - there wasn't anything real fierce or vicious about it. I forget who wound up with the girl".

There then followed an excerpt from the film, "HOLIDAY INN", in which Fred proposes yet again to 'the girl' and leading into the scene where all three participate in the song "I'll Capture Your Heart"; the young lady in question being Marjorie Reynolds. Bing's memory is a little at fault here as there was no sister act in "HOLIDAY INN" - probably thinking of "WHITE CHRISTMAS" - and neither the script writer nor David Niven noted the error - in fact he perpetuated it.

Niven: "As a matter of fact it was Crosby who captured her heart in the end, and although Bing is tactfully vague about it that was the first time in his screen career that Fred ever lost a girl to the other fellow. And "HOLIDAY INN" deserves to go down in the record books for that reason alone. There were compensations for Fred because the girl had a sister, so that was alright".

Marjorie Reynolds gave her meed of praise to Fred and then David Niven went on to say:

Niven: "...although Marjorie Reynolds was saying just now that she was in love with Astaire it was Crosby she ended up with in the picture. Crosby, of course, also ended up singing a song in "HOLIDAY INN" which turned out

to be just about the biggest bonanza in the history of popular music".

"White Christmas", of course: and the 1947 commercial version by Bing was featured at this point.

Niven: "So in view of the reaction to that little item it's not surprising the 'HOLIDAY INN' film was remembered as not a great Astaire film".

Part 10, "ONE MORE FOR THE ROAD", was taken up primarily with Fred's retirements, of which there were several, his horses, and his visit to the UK and the war.

Fred: "My assignment was a unit that I would pick up when I got over there of U.S.O. performers - and, incidentally, Crosby was doing one at the same time".

BING: "I had a little show - a girl dancer, a girl singer, and a comedian and an accordian and guitar player. I entertained around England - and I ran into him when I was to go over to Normandy: I guess it was a couple of months after D-Day; and we wound up at the airport - I think it was Northolt, that I left from, and we were in the same 'plane - a DC3. Of course, we were overjoyed at seeing one another again; and I said 'where's the pilot?'. He said 'I wanna tell you something; I don't know whether we get in this plane or not!' I said 'What's the matter?' He said 'Take a look, there's the pilot over there!'. He was a guy that looked like he was about fifteen years old. I don't think he had ever shaved! He was some American kid - hot-shot pilot - and he couldn't have been more than seventeen years old. But we got aboard and he landed us at Cherbourg. Then we split up and worked our way up towards Paris, which had just been liberated".

Fred: "He went off to entertain one army - which was Patton's army. Mine was Eisenhower. Then we got together and worked a show together for about two weeks ... we performed for numbers of places - entertained out in the fields and in the theatres. Wherever there were a bunch of soldiers in that area - there were thousands of them out there - they all got into the theatre that night for the show. We usually had a good show for them".

BING: "We wound up south of Paris called Melun, and we met together there and we stayed there about a week entertaining various units. And I'd see him every morning for breakfast. They had a big mess there. And they had a lot of little French girls serving as waitresses. I'd sing a few songs; whistle, and couldn't get any recognition out of these French girls. He teased me about it and I said 'Well, they don't recognise you, either! So I guess we're not very big in France, in this area - not very well known'. Monday morning we were sitting there having breakfast and one of these girls came running, screaming out of the kitchen with a magazine - an old magazine, of Fred and Ginger Rogers dancing - and they jumped and screamed and wanted his autograph and fussed over him, and I didn't get a tumble - never a tumble! He used to tease me about that - how big he was in Melun. Well, I was unknown. One night early after we'd left Melun, we met somewhere and they shelled the town, and we had to get out and get in some bunkers, and he got over in a ditch, I think ... it was quite exciting for a couple of broken down entertainers!"

If only all entertainers were equally 'broken down'! Bing's last comment was followed by their duet, "I'll Capture Your Heart" - and then "Moonlight Serenade" as a musical tribute to Fred's reference to the loss of Glenn Miller.

Niven: "It was in 1946 that Fred, preoccupied, he must have been with Tripligate's great triumphs (Fred's outstanding horse), worked in harness with another thoroughbred at the same time. Crosby, crossed his path again".

BING: "Well, I guess the studio fixed it up. I suppose the studio thought it would be a good idea to team us up again".

These two comments led into the scene half-way through "BLUE SKIES" where Bing and Fred meet after a long absence and go into their "Couple of Song and Dance

Men" routine. This was the dialogue from the soundtrack, but the commercial recording was used for the musical interlude which followed. Certainly the soundtrack has more visual appeal.

This has been a fascinating series on a great artiste, and it makes a pleasant change to hear new anecdotes about and from Bing. It was noticeable in Part 10 that some not very skillful editing of Bing speaking occurred, and although the films of Bing and Fred have now been dealt with, there may yet be more from him in the last three programmes.

Birthday tributes to Irving Berlin have been a fairly regular feature on TV and radio ever since his 75th, at least, so it seems. As each anniversary comes around once again we are invited to listen to a seemingly unending and incredible list of hit songs written and composed by the most prolific composer of popular songs of all time. This year 'Mr. Music of America' reached the ripe old age of 87; and on both radio and BBC TV there were programmes of some duration to mark the occasion. Happily, Bing was featured in both. Indeed, it would be difficult to exclude Bing from any programme that was centred on the man who wrote the greatest selling song ever - "White Christmas"! The radio programme went out on the 'Star Sound' hour between 6.03 and 7.00 p.m., introduced by David Bellan and written and compiled by Lyn Fairhurst, on Saturday, 10th May. The following day, BBC-One's "OMNIBUS" ran an hour-and-a-quarter of facts, figures and music in a programme written and narrated by Benny Green. The most interesting moment of the programme, of course, was a clipping from the film "WHITE CHRISTMAS", showing Bing singing the title song to the troops. At a later point, Bing was to be seen talking with Berlin in a clip dating from 1950...

BING: "Irving, what's your plans for this new show you're gonna produce?"
 Berlin: "Well, you know - doing a show with Lindsey and Krauss called 'CALL ME MADAM'".
 BING: "Uh, huh. Who's in it?"
 Berlin: "Ethel Merman gonna star..."
 BING: "The mighty Merman! Oh, you're loaded, Irving, you're in good shape".
 Berlin: "I hope so".
 BING: "Got some great songs, I bet".
 Berlin: "Well, I don't know. I like what I got!"
 BING: "Well, if you like 'em they must be. I hope I get a crack at them - get to record them before some of these 'Johnny-come-latelys' grab 'em, uh? You really know. Give me the inside track, uh?"

As Benny Green went on to say, Bing didn't make the production though a good many stars did. However, an interesting situation seems to have arisen here for it was at that time that Bing, with Gary, were making a million seller out of the nearly 40 years old Berlin counter-melody song "Play a Simple Melody", possibly suggesting to Irving Berlin that another one might not come amiss. As it transpired, "I Wonder Why" ("You're Just in Love"), the counter-melody duet from "CALL ME MADAM" was the hit of the show.

That, then, was the sum total of Bing's contribution to the TV "OMNIBUS" programme on the great popular song composer, but despite his minimal mention it was well worth watching.

....One last word....

The recently discovered Crosby recording "Ooh, Maybe it's You" was also a Berlin number, and was written for the 1927 "ZIEGFELD FOLLIES"!

ANOTHER "FLUFF"?

We have long been of the opinion that Bing slightly 'fluffs' the opening of "Swinging Down The Lane" (L 4581-A) - listen to the way he sings "lane" in the first verse! His rendition of the word indicates a suppressed laugh or cough which, but for his hasty correction, might have ruined an otherwise perfect 'take'. Worthy of mention in any comprehensive discography, surely? (EDITOR)

 CROSBY SHOPPE

FREE advertising for members wishing to
 buy, sell or exchange items of Crosbyana.

WANTED: MGM 'single': "The Second Time Around", and number 9 in the "BING'S HOLLYWOOD" series. These records are urgently required by John Ewens who can be contacted by referring to his address and telephone number under the title of 'A MIXED BLESSING' elsewhere in this issue.

WANTED: "OLD MASTERS" (AH 17), "BING'S HOLLYWOOD" (numbers 8, 9 and 12), "HOME ON THE RANGE" (LAT 8152), "TWILIGHT ON THE TRAIL" (LAT 8253) and "DRIFTING AND DREAMING" (LAT 8334). Please write to John Bignell, 21 St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex. (Tel: 904-2539).

WANTED: LAT 8044, 8106, 8278, 8331, 8334, 8505, 8216; Capitol T2300, T2346; Longines 7-LP set LWS343 to LWS349. Good prices paid but good condition LP's are essential. In exchange for any of the above requirements, I have for disposal "BING'S HOLLYWOOD" (numbers 10 and 14) and "A MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY" (LAT 8382). Please write to J. Woad, 71 Castle Crescent, Thornhill, Dewsbury, West Yorks. WF12 0EH.

FOR SALE: Lists available of about 600 78's - assorted artistes with a few Bing Crosby items amongst them. These are spares from my own collection. Please write to Albert Pattison, Ingham Villa, Ox Carr Lane, Strensall, York.

FOR EXCHANGE: I have spare copies of the 'Triple B' baseball LP (reviewed in this issue) which I will be willing to exchange for "TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL HOLLI- DAY" (UK Columbia) and "THE WILFRED THOMAS SHOW" (AU Festival). I also have one spare copy of each of the following: "TWILIGHT ON THE TRAIL" (US Decca 8365) and "BING SINGS THE GREAT COUNTRY HITS" (Capitol T2346). In exchange for either of these I could use the Ace Of Hearts album "ICHABOD" (AH 136). Please write to Dave Rapp, 931 Decker Lane, Warminster, P.A. 18974, U.S.A.

FOR SALE: MCA 5-LP set "BING - A MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY" (MUP 461-465). New condition. £5.50 (including Postage and Packing). First come - first served. Write to the Editor. (Note: This is not the recent issue in MCA's 'Rainbow Series')

 The following items are available to members only:-

CLUB TIES in navy blue and of the finest possible quality, worn by the Editor and hundreds of members at many public functions.
 £1.10 each, plus 5p p&p

CLUB CAR BADGES for either grille or bar fitting - please state your requirements.
 £3.50 each, plus 15p p&p

Both items bear the special full-colour emblem designed for the ICC. Please allow eight weeks for delivery. Cash with order, please, to:

RON BAXTER, The BADGE CENTRE,
 24 ROPERGATE, PONTEFRAC, T,
 WEST YORKSHIRE, WF18 1LY
 Tel: 2351

"THE GUNN REPORT" - a regular magazine full of record sales and auctions. Always plenty of Bing and Bix. For details of subscriptions, please write to JOHN GUNN, 15 LYNTON ROAD, HADLEIGH, BENFLEET, ESSEX.

 Occasionally, members come into the possession of some of Bing's radio shows on large transcription records, only to find that such discs will not fit onto the turntable of their ordinary record playing equipment. Now the problem is solved, for EDWARD HALE has access to such facilities. Members wishing to have their records taped should contact Edward at 48 Highbury Hill, London, N5 1AP. (SAE appreciated). Records up to 24" in diameter can be dealt with.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ A "MIXED" BLESSING @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

by JOHN EWENS

For some considerable while now, John Bassett has suggested I might like to make a contribution to these revered pages. The trouble is that after reading such interesting and well put together articles by people like Bert Bishop, Leslie Gaylor, Reg Bristo and John Bassett, I can only hope that my modest contributions will be acceptable to the noble body of discerning purchasers of "BING" magazine.

Like those other lucky people who were at Chappel Studios in London on Wednesday 26th. February I was fortunate in not only watching a great performance but also in actually talking to Bing for a brief spell.

While this was the culmination of a lifetimes ambition, the magic of that morning also holds another very special memory for me.

I am referring to the immense pleasure it gave me to meet people like Les Gaylor, Reg Bristo, Frank Murphy and Bob Roberts for the first time.

It was so pleasing to realise that not only are these men devoted enthusiasts, but also such refreshing company. It is a shame that we don't get the chance to get together more often, but of course our home locations are so widespread it is not really practical.

My daily dose of "Crosby listening" consists of almost two hours each morning and two hours each night. This is because I am what might be called a "reverse commuter", living in South Essex and working near Cambridge.

This means departing just after 6.00 a.m. each morning for a lengthy car journey. Needless to say with this sort of journey twice daily, I have seized the opportunity to turn what might otherwise have been an imposition into something of immense pleasure.

I have an excellent Philips Stereo system in my car and have recorded the best of my records onto cassettes. As you can imagine, what with an excellent breakfast at a transport Café halfway and fresh from a heavy spell of Bing records, I am relaxed and ready to face the day by the time I reach my office.

I come now to the main purpose of my dialogue, which is to extend an invitation to any member of this Society to visit an establishment which will hold a very significant interest, particularly to the more discerning sound enthusiasts amongst you.

No doubt after a lifetime of collecting records you must often give thoughts from time to time about the circumstances under which these records are made and the equipment with which they are made.

I am fortunate to work for a Company that makes Sound Mixing Consoles for T.V., Radio, Films and Recording Studios. It is no idle boast that we have a name for producing the finest quality mixers in the world, and because of this, all the major Broadcasting Corporations and Recording Companies both here and in America, not to mention Europe, are fitted with our equipment.

My role in the Company is that of Director of Manufacturing and in this capacity I have the job of looking after the two substantial factories, one being near Cambridge and the other in Kelso, Scotland.

I won't try to describe the extensive technology associated with this field of activity, firstly because it would be too lengthy to deal with in this manner and secondly because I am a modest manufacturing man rather than a technical expert.

However, coming back to my offer to any of you who would like to come and look round as my guest, I will lay on the real experts to tell you all about it, as well as show you the wide range of attractive mixers from table top size to massive four seater consoles.

Those interested might like to give me a ring or drop a line and we will fix a convenient date. The address is Mr. John A. Ewens., Neve Electronic Holdings Ltd, Cambridge House, Melbourn, Nr. Royston, (Herts) 60776.

In conclusion I would like to add my tribute to the many others on the truly magnificent effort in putting this magazine together so regularly by John Bassett. I know that it brings with its every issue a host of interesting reading so eagerly awaited by those of us who have followed the career of Bing Crosby through the years.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ DO I HEAR YOU SAYING? @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

Highlights from the EDITOR's Postbag...

LESLIE GAYLOR (Isle of Wight) writes: Many thanks to all concerned for the production of "BING"-37. The standard was very good indeed and the issue made worthwhile reading. I would like to pass on my personal thanks to John and Reg for the pleasure the magazine gives me. My nature is such that I have to start reading it immediately it arrives! I would also like to thank all those who conveyed to me their joy at knowing of Bing's great recording sessions in London. Ken Barnes, the producer of Bing's albums, would particularly like to obtain a new or good condition copy of the 12" LP "SOME FINE OLD CHESTNUTS". If anyone has a spare copy, will they kindly get in touch with me. With reference to the recordings of "The Search is Through", "It's Mine, It's Yours" and the other two songs from the film "THE COUNTRY GIRL", these were commercially recorded on 23rd December 1954. In "BING"-35 (page 16), the dates given refer to the film soundtrack recordings only. The Decca commercial recording dates are correct as shown in the "MINI-DISCOGRAPHY".

(EDITOR's comment: Thanks, Leslie - we stand corrected on this matter.)

ARTHUR HOLMES (Middlesex) writes: "BING"-37 is just great! And all the wonderful news concerning the recording sessions! I shall really have to exercise an awful lot of patience waiting for the LP's to be released, but they will be well worth waiting for - with a vengeance. And I can just imagine the thrill and excitement in meeting Bing, especially so unexpectedly - of such stuff are dreams made!

(EDITOR's comment: Susan and I have now been in Bing's company for a total of 2 hours 10 minutes, and believe me - it still seems like a dream! This is in addition to watching him record the "PARKINSON" show, of course).

KEN CROSSLAND (Leeds) writes: It must have been a marvellous experience to be present at one of the recording sessions, and I hope that it might be repeated on a larger scale at the "PARKINSON" show this July. We live in hope! You'll see that I've enclosed a photograph of Bing taken direct from the television screen during his appearance on "GRANDSTAND". Given the circumstances, I think it has come out rather well. I don't know if the quality is good enough for the magazine, but if you wish, please feel free to use it.

(EDITOR's comment: Unfortunately, it is impractical to make an electronic stencil from a colour print, and I fear that a black-and-white copy would lack the 'contrast' needed to achieve successful reproduction. However, Ken, the photograph makes a welcome addition to the collection, for which many thanks. Reg will always be pleased to receive good black-and-white pictures for possi-

ble inclusion in each issue of the magazine, but SAE's should accompany the pictures if they have to be returned to the sender.)

JOHN BIGNELL (Middlesex) writes: I was particularly interested in Susan's choice of eight favourite Bing records - five dating from 1940 and earlier. Your own list was revealing but nothing from the 1930's? I must admit this caused a raised eyebrow from yours truly! I've had sight of two issues of the American magazine "BINGANG" and thought it was way below our standard in content. Beautifully produced and the drawings by Joe Sinnot were first class - but the contributors were nearly all ladies without much to say except how much they liked Bing. Very little perceptive comment or analysis except for Ken Gray's Mid-West scene news. It made me realise just how lucky we are here with our all-star line up ... Colin Pugh, Bert Bishop and Keith Parkinson to name a few. But one thought comes to mind - why no regular lady contributor to "BING"? I know of at least two very knowledgeable and keen members on the distaff side ... I won't mention any names here but come on, girls, let's have your anecdotes and reminiscences!

=====

THEY'VE SUNG ABOUT BING

ALBERT PATTISON (Ingham Villa, Ox Carr Lane, Strensall, York) writes: I found a large number of 78's recently which included a lot of Bing items, bringing my total to around 100. There were also two records by other artists which included references to Bing and it set me thinking that there are probably many references to him in song. I feel sure I have heard others but cannot locate them in my collection at the moment. Do you think that my letter might start off correspondence with a view to compiling a listing of such records? If you think it's possible, I could probably act as the collator of the material. My two initial offerings are:-

"When the guardsman started crooning on parade"
 - Bobbie Comber (Rex 8679)
 "If I could sing like Bing"
 - Dean Martin (Capitol CL 14180)

EDITOR's comments:

Here are a few more for Albert's list. Sources of reference include "CROSBY ON RECORD" and my own collection...

"When the guardsman started crooning on parade"
 - Henry Hall & BBC Dance Orchestra (Parlophone FB 1222)
 "My kid's a crooner"
 - Harry Roy & his Orchestra (Parlophone F 109)
 - Ambrose & his Orchestra (Decca F 5393)
 - Phyllis Robins (Rex 8378)
 "I'm the guy who found the lost chord"
 - Jimmy Durante (MGM)
 "I think I can"
 - Jack Buchanan (Columbia DB 1483)
 "Only forever"
 - Al Bowlly (Decca)
 "But definitely"
 - Shirley Temple
 "Crosby, Columbo and Vallee"
 - Victor Young & his Orchestra (USA Brunswick 6239)
 "Broadway's gone Hill-Billy"
 - Ramona-Park Avenue Boys (USA Victor 24598)
 "When my ship comes in"
 - Anson Weeks & his Orchestra (USA Brunswick 6990)
 "Eeny-meeny-miney mo"
 - Benny Goodman & his Orchestra (USA Victor 25195)
 "Changing my ambitions"
 - Pinky Tomlin (USA Brunswick 7594)

- "These foolish things"
- Joe Sanders & his Orchestra (USA Decca 843)
- "Swell people"
- Dolly Dawn and her Dawn Patrol (USA Varsity 544)
- "Love is on the air tonight"
- Dick Powell (USA Decca 1431)
- "Is that good?"
- Joan Merrill (USA Bluebird 11220)
- "Bing Crosby"
- The Lion (USA Decca 17415)
- "Jumpin' at the record shop"
- Slim Gaillard Quartette (USA Atomic 216)
- "Gotta be this or that" (Part 1)
- Benny Goodman & his Orchestra (USA Columbia 36813)
- "Humphrey Bogart rhumba"
- Freddy Martin & his Orchestra (USA Victor 20-3350)
- "Chinese mule train"
- Spike Jones & his Orchestra (USA Victor 20-3741)
- "A band that money can't buy - Dinah"
- Jack Hylton & his Orchestra (Decca F 3764)

HE'S STILL NUMBER ONE Barry Freestone continues...

And take "Young at heart" - it is Bing who should have had a million seller with this one - not Sinatra! What of the 1960's? Who can deny that albums such as "HEY JUDE/HEY BING!" prove that Bing is still at the top? So in answer to the question "When was Bing at his best", my answer is this ... He's still at his best, but different people have their own favourite periods. Mine just happens to be 1931-1935. What's yours?

* 'CROSBY SHOPPE' LATE ADDITION *

FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE: (All normal UK issues except where indicated)

1. "BING SINGS WHILST BREGMAN SWINGS"
2. "BING CROSBY SINGS THE GREAT COUNTRY HITS"
3. "AROUND THE WORLD IN DIXIELAND"
4. "12 SONGS OF CHRISTMAS"
5. "THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND" (H 30931)
6. "GUYS AND DOLLS" (HS 11374)

FOR EXCHANGE ONLY:

1. "ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS"
2. "ADVENTURES IN PARADISE" (EP)
3. "THOROUGHLY MODERN BING"
4. "BING CROSBY SINGS 'VAYA CON DIOS'" (VL 3603)
5. "BING IN PARIS"
6. "BING SINGS FOR CHILDREN"
7. "BELOVED HYMNS"
8. "BING - RARE STYLE"
9. "BING'S HOLLYWOOD", Numbers 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15.
10. Bing's autobiography: "Call Me Lucky".

* Write to: *
* BARRY FREESTONE, *
* 5 Glanville Road, *
* Blenheim Gardens, *
* Brixton, S.W.2. *

MY 'WANTS': "BING'S HOLLYWOOD", numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. "DER BINGLE" (10" Fontana). "CROSBY CLASSICS, Volume 2" (10" Columbia). "BING'S FAVOURITES" (Z 4027). Also the following 78's: "Shadow waltz", "I've got to pass your house", "My love", "Maybe I'm wrong again", "Without a word of warning", "Takes two to make a bargain", "Summer time".

* THE REMAINDER OF THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN COMPILED AND TYPED BY REG BRISTO *

REG BRISTO WRITES -

"BING KISSED ME!"

No, no, NO! not me - but one of our newest (and certainly youngest members) can say that with truth, and I cannot help wondering how that strikes our hordes of lady-readers!

And it also makes me wonder if BING does right by the ladies, generally speaking. Do we give them their due? I suppose it is true that much of the material printed here is hard-rock, basic, Crosbyana - things like "takes", record nos., matrix numbers, who played what when with Bing, comparisons of the different decades throughout which Bing has sung.... good stuff, indeed, excellent stuff. But at this late stage I do find myself asking: do the ladies get a fair crack of the whip in our pages?

And it was the quote above about being kissed by Bing that set me off on this track. That plus the fact that a letter from John Bignell told me that he had made the acquaintance of that estimable Crosby journal BINGANG of America apropos which John wrote:

"....must mention that Sylvia Lawrence has been a real 'friend in need' to me. Two of the elusive BING'S HOLLYWOOD, Nos. 14 and 15 have now been followed by 'Bing Sings for Children'.....not only this, but Sylvia has sent me a couple of the US BINGANG magazines. Very interesting and beautifully produced - but the content is streets behind our own mag, BING. It seems to be made up, mostly, of female adulation with practically no factual gems to mull over at all...."

Well, spare our blushes about being streets ahead (and apologies to Dot Hardiman who is principally concerned with BINGANG'S production) but BING is undeniably short on "female adulation". Not by design, though, as it happens! True, Olive Gregory has waxed lyrical over Bing in delightfully feminine fashion, and some others over the years have put pen to paper to say what they admire about Bing but by and large I have a feeling that the ladies could, and should, perhaps play a larger part in BING.

Not that I want undue feminine adulation, or ANY sloppy adulation, for that matter. As a matter of interest, there is not another artist in this world for whom I would spend a fair part of my leisure time in preparing a "fan" magazine. Even further, I don't think BING can be so-called; more it is a sensible, appreciative, commentary on a wondrous career. Most "fan" magazines make me want to curl up in sheer embarrassment, if not nausea. The idea is fostered that everything the principal has done is marvellous. It seldom is - though conversely, almost everything Bing does, and has done, does happen to fall into that category! And that's not ALL my personal bias, surely?

Not the least important aspect of this remarkable character, Bing Crosby, has been his virtually instant appeal to all stratas of the community, young and old, male and female. Definitely a man's man - the sheer vigour and timbre of his voice ensured that - yet Bing has had a uniquely romantic appeal - by the songs he has sung, by the roles he has acted, ensuring a huge female following. And the appeal wasn't to "bobby-soxers" alone; it was to the young, the middle, and the aged! So often I hear "....my mother/father were a bit old-fashioned...they just couldn't stand 'crooners' - but Bing was different."

HE CERTAINLY WAS - AND IS!

So, sloppiness it definitely out, for all time, but if the ladies feel the urge to make a bigger and better show in our pages they are very, very, welcome. And if they can start

with a headline like BING KISSED ME! I'm sure they will be the envy of the others....

But speaking of Bing's universal appeal, almost from the word go, it is relevant to think of "publicity". Though Bing was ably guided by many people in his career did he ever need a publicity agent? I mean one to dream up "gimmicks" like getting bobby-soxers (sic) to swoon in the audience when he started to sing? Of course he didn't. Or dress up in sequins or use outrageous make-up? The idea is laughable....almost since that night in September 1931 when he made that first coast-to-coast broadcast - his first solo airing - it is not difficult to imagine that Bing's main concern has been to try and assuage, lessen, his publicity!

There are those old enough among us to know the allusion to "bobby-soxers" swooning..... if you're not, well it doesn't matter! Make-up for so-called popular singers, and sequins, are a modern phenomena but the bobby-soxers syndrome goes back to 1938/39.....

While on the subject of publicity this may be a good point to make just now: Bing's visits to this country these days are never the subject of a publicity build-up. In fact, mostly it seems to be the opposite as far as Bing himself is concerned. But this doesn't stop the press, radio and TV latching-on to Bing's "quiet" arrival: so to all those who not unnaturally keep writing in asking for Bing's itinerary because they so much want to meet him, all we can say is "Watch the papers, or listen to the radio!" That's as much as we can say, truthfully. Bing's activities seem to be arranged virtually "on the spot" these days - certainly his radio and TV appearances in February were.

He will certainly be playing golf in Scotland when he comes in July - indeed, I have a letter from DUNCAN McLEAN in Alloa (that's in Scotland, not Hawaii!) enclosing a cutting from a Scottish newspaper which says Bing may even be giving a public concert in Edinburgh! The report reads:

"OLD GROANER" MAY SING FOR SCOTS: Bing Crosby may give his first public concert in 10 years in Scotland, at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh... Bing flies over here to play with old Buddy Bob Hope in the £12,000 Pineapple Pro-Am golf tournament at Turnberry on July 5....and in the £10,000 Classic at DALMAHOY the next day...

London record producer Ken Barnes is going over to the States to persuade Bing to fit in the Usher Hall date while he is in Scotland..... Bing has already said that if he does the show he wants the proceeds to go to charity....."

Isn't that a mind-boggling thought! We'll keep our fingers crossed for Scotland...an appearance on the Parkinson or Dimpleby, or any other TV show, will no doubt be fixed when Bing is here. More than that we cannot tell you.

OUR YOUNGEST READER

is certainly the young lady who was kissed by Bing! She is nine years of age!

Not all of Bing's activities when he was here in February last were fully reported, it seems, for I had the following letter from Mr. J.A.L. Carter of Liphook, Hampshire:

"....I would be much obliged if you would make my 9 year-old daughter a member of The International Crosby Circle and send her anything suitable about Bing Crosby. At nine she is a bit young to fully appreciate what a great star Bing is. However, some three or four weeks ago my daughter was competing at a Horse Show at Frensham at which Bing presented the rosettes. Alicia was on her diminutive pony 'Mr. Perks' and as he presented her with a rosette he kissed her! What a charming gesture!"

Indeed, typically Bing. But what can you tell a nine-year-old little girl like Alicia

Carter of the true magnitude of a world-personality like Bing? Perhaps our readers may care to attempt it; we'll print some of the results. However, I wrote to Alicia and told her that she would certainly be envied by a lot of people; that Bing Crosby had been making gramophone records since before even her father was born; that he had the most recorded voice in the world and the most easily recognised - see "SAIGON SERENADE" as an example - and of course I wished her lots of happiness and success with Mr. Perks.

I also wrote to Mr. Carter, of course, and was happy to receive the following reply and also one from Alicia herself in typical 9-year-old style:

"How kind of you to write not only to my daughter but also such an interesting letter to me. Alicia is thrilled with her pictures of Bing and I think as day succeeds day she will appreciate more and more what a great honour she received at actually being kissed by the great star himself.

"For your information the horse-show event took place at the Priory School of Equitation at Frensham, Surrey, on 23rd February, 1975. It was an indoor covered riding school and Alicia (aged 9 and minus her front teeth!) was jumping indoors for the first time ever. There was a large class of fifty or more children and Alicia was placed seventh. Actually, she was the youngest competitor riding the smallest pony!

and Alicia wrote:

"Dear Mr. Bristo: Thank you very much for the letter and the pictures. I think it was very kind of you to send them.

I enjoyed meeting Bing at Frensham last month.

Perky, my pony, has been jumping very well lately. A few days ago he jumped a 3ft 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " spread. I am going to jump at a show soon and I hope he will do well. Hope that you are well.

Lots and lots of love,

from Alicia".

=====

Quite an unusual introduction to the world of Bing Crosby! We are fairly used to young people who get the Crosby-magic by listening to the records of their parents but this is the first, and as I said, easily the youngest to join The Circle via a horse-show. But little Alicia is very welcome - and as her father said, she cannot fail to come to appreciate what a lovely, unique thing happened for her at Frensham. Mind, we could have told her that other ladies who have been kissed by Mr. Crosby include Princess Grace of Monaco (Grace Kelly, that was, in HIGH SOCIETY); Ingrid Bergman, Jane Wyman, Joan Bennett, Rosemary Clooney, Dorothy Lamour, Joan Caulfield and many, many, others - but then, a nine-year-old would probably say: "And who are THEY?" Still, we may reflect that Alicia Carter almost certainly knows who it was who made the biggest-selling record in history - one that has sold more than 30 million copies: "WHITE CHRISTMAS".

It won't escape readers either that Bing, so harried on that particular visit - it last about 10 days and he was on radio, TV., made 26 song recordings, gave goodness knows how many interviews to press representatives, stood patiently while he was photographed hundreds of times - found time to attend a horse-jumping show in Surrey; and found time, incidentally, to make a lot of people happy, especially our new friend, Alicia Carter.

=====

Mr. Carter got my address, of course, from that radio broadcast which was probably the biggest plug the IOC has ever had. We might have known, but didn't, that this was coming off! Otherwise we would have been better prepared!

(Cont. over...)

THAT BROADCAST

Publicity, or the lack of it, is always a problem for us. We are well aware that there are considerably more Crosby admirers not in The Circle than there are in it!

That is not their desire, and nor is it ours....they just don't know about us. I had a letter the other week from a new entry who wrote: ".....what a joy to discover that I can join an organisation of kindred spirits. I had begun to think I was the only Crosby fan left in the world....."

Over-stating the case, no doubt, but we know what he means! There is probably no-one who has quite the virtually universal fan-ship of Bing - not that they all feel moved to join our Circle, but fans nevertheless. But reaching those who DO want to be in the fold is a constant problem for us. We rely on members spreading the word. And we rely heavily on that powerhouse of Crosby-propaganda, LESLIE GAYLOR, the best-known Bing-fan in the world! And we rely on all those keen members who write to the producers and dee-jays (if you'll pardon the term) at the BBC., and local radio stations, and those who write letters to the newspapers to work up just a little mention of the ICC.

TONY BULLER, living in Guiseborough in the new county of Cleveland, wrote and said had we thought of advertising in some of the music paper? Yes, we have - and its an expensive business, especially in these troublous times. But Tony's letter coincided with the nationwide announcement on BBC Radio 2 on a Sunday afternoon about the ICC - which ended with the name and address of yours truly (Reg Bristo) being spelled out! Several readers had written to me to the effect that Teddy Johnson was doing a radio series entitled "The Vocal Touch" and had been heard to mention fan clubs.

So I sent Mr. Johnson a copy of the Christmas issue of Bing together with a letter recalling Teddy's own singing career, with that of his wife Pearl Carr before good voices had to take a back seat. And sure enough, we got the "mention" the following Sunday. This was extraordinarily lucky because it happened to be the last programme in the series, and Teddy Johnson couldn't have got BING until the preceding Thursday!

Although it seems radio has made something of a comeback this last couple of years after being to all intents and purposes completely vanquished by television, it is still difficult to tell how many people listen to "steam-radio" as its termed - especially when a Fred Astaire/Ginger Rogers film is being shown on "the box"! Which was the counter-attraction when Teddy Johnson gave such a wonderful boost to the ICC at between 3.30 and 4.00pm on a Sunday afternoon in April last.

THEIR FIRST "BING": Because of that broadcast a fair number of new readers are receiving this issue as their first BING. Honesty compels us to report that while we didn't get sackfuls of mail there was a most interesting and healthy response. But because of the need to plan each issue economically these days, not more than a dozen copies of BING above known requirements are printed. So when the mail began to come in for further news of the ICC this dozen copies disappeared overnight!

This was a tremendous pity because the last issue of BING (April) was quite momentous in that it dealt in depth with Bing's visit to London and of the meeting of several of our members with Mr. C. Apart from all the usual interesting features, that is. All I could do for our numerous enquirers, therefore, was to send them our leaflet, some pictures and a copy of the 78rpm record listing we issued with BING as a supplement a few issues back. Happily, without exception the enquirers all joined the fold...and found out they were NOT indeed the last Bing-fans in the world!

The enquiries included one from a "blind arthritic" - that's how he described himself, and is the sort of double-affliction that wrings the heart. He asked if it were possible for him to have a cassette of some of Bing's great songs of the 30s and 40s. He had a C90 by return of post almost and was immensely gratified. But its such a mite in the face of unbelievable adversity. Then there was a letter from ULSTER TELEVISION seeking our aid. They were doing a programme on Jimmy Kennedy, the famous British songwriter and

wanted to know the films in which Bing sang some of Jimmy's fine songs, e.g. Red Sails in the Sunset, Isle of Capri, South of the Border and many others. But the truth is Bing never sang a Kennedy song in a film! On radio, of course - but I had to explain that Bing's films invariably contained either standards or songs from a specially-commissioned writer or team of writers. I had no reply to that one; no doubt it threw a spanner in the works!

I believe I mentioned recently that BING is filed in the Library of Congress, in Washington, and now the Library of the University of Exeter houses several of our publications including the LP-ography, the A to Z of Bing Crosby and the 78rpm record listing. It seems a comprehensive bibliography of jazz and associated publications is being worked on at the University and they sought our permission to list these items as well as BING. Permission was gladly given, especially when we were told full acknowledgement would be given to the ICC. These are, of course, further illustrations that Bing's phenomenal career is receiving its rightful recognition - and tribute.

=====

Equally interesting were the letters that came from listeners who were sufficiently interested in Bing to write - and join us. Most of them made delightful reading and they came, of course, from all over the country. There was the letter from Joan Mills with the utterly entrancing address:

"Tertio", The Butts, Lydiard Millicent.....I just had to learn more of that. and Joan told me: "Lydiard Millicent (prettiest place-name in Wiltshire) lies four miles outside of Swindon town, a nice little village but like many others is being developed quite a lot. If the March issue of BING is no longer available I shall have to wait for the June issue. My husband and I have been great fans of Bing and have quite a large selection of his records so we shall look forward to future issues of the magazine."

=====

Yes, it must be one of the prettiest place-names anywhere, I think. And we hope this issue of BING doesn't assume the aspects of "after the Lord Mayor's show", bearing in mind the tremendous issue that came out in April detailing, as I've already remarked, Bing's great visit to London. John Bassett and I will be keeping our fingers crossed, conscious as we are that this is the first BING for a lot of people.

=====

DAVE BURROWS, an enthusiast from Northolt (Middlesex really is producing some great letter-writers these days) did not, as a matter of fact, hear the broadcast, but DID hear about us from - yes, Leslie Gaylor! Dave wrote: Now AT LAST I can get in touch with Crosby addicts; I got Leslie's address via the Charlie Chester Show on radio and BINGO! I've made it! What a pleasure to have your letter! As Bing would say: DEE-lighted! My other musical interests are the Gilbert & Sullivan recordings, plus good recordings of the popular classics and trad jazz - and going to see reissues of WC Fields - wouldn't it be great to see MISSISSIPPI again, with Bing and WC? Wishing you and the ICC ever widening popularity....."

=====

Then there was the letter from Michael Holmes of Chiswick High Road who wrote: "My main interest is in Bing's earlier career, the years up to 1934...." and I thought WHOOPS! here we go again! I had to tell Mr. Holmes that he has a lot of contemporaries but that nothing, NOTHING, enlivens the correspondence in BING ^{more} than a statement that Bing's best years ended around 1934..... There's quite a number of them...though John Bignell, a somewhat shaken John at that, is now prepared to admit that Bing made some good records in the 'Fifties! But this "era" aspect of Bing's career really is a fascinating subject for discussion. I wrote to Mr. Holmes to this effect. When one considers songs such as BLUE PEARL, YOU'VE GOT ME CRYING AGAIN, PLEASE, LOVE IN BLOOM, PLAYING WITH FIRE, SOME DAY WE'LL MEET AGAIN, I APOLOGISE, I SURRENDER, DEAR: MILLION DOLLAR BABY, JUST ONE MORE CHANCE, SHINE, SNUGGLED ON YOUR SHOULDER, SHADOWS ON THE WINDOW, CABIN IN THE COTTON,

and scores of other wonderful songs it is natural perhaps for those who vividly recall those exciting days to think of them as supreme. Maybe they were. But one should remember that Bing was startling NEW in those days. Singing of his style had not been heard before, his phrasing tricks, his unique timbre, his tremendously modest personality; then radio and gramophone records were really getting into their stride as mass-media; his early pictures were possibly all the more exciting to us because we were all so anxious, after hearing this astonishing voice, to see the man! And then one comes back to something that is often sneered at today when it is uttered: THEY DON'T WRITE SONGS LIKE THAT ANY MORE! Well, do they?

For my money - very rarely. So, they must be some of the reasons why those who became aware of Bing from the outset must rate them as his greatest period. But surely the period is much too restrictive in a career that has, to date, lasted 50 years? And what of those who heard Bing for the first time in the 50's, the 60's, even the '70s? And came under the same spell without knowing a thing about the 30s? One must honour and appreciate their views. But having said that, it is significant that anyone who gets interested in the Crosby voice in those later decades, usually finds himself or herself, bewitched by the 30s and are keen to know more about them. Mike Crampton of Leeds is a great example: he joined the ICC in 1950 when he was - 14! It was the British Crosby Society in those days! He had heard Bing in the 40s and became an "instant fan". Nowadays Mike can reel off Bing's records with Whiteman, Arnheim, Grier and the rest - aye and give you the "takes" and record numbers! It's Mike's opinion that Bing's best period is 1926 to date!

But as I said, this analysis of decades remains a fascinating aspect of Crosbyana.

AND to complement the above remarks there came this letter from MR. L.F. JEFFES, of Chester: As an admirer of Bing Crosby and his unparalleled contribution to the entertainment business I would be most grateful for details of what the Crosby Circle offers. Although I am twenty-one and was born long after Bing Crosby became a major star, I am very interested in the era in which he became famous and helped to create such a legend as well as his influence to this day on singing styles. It was most interesting to see that informative listing of Bing's 78rpm records.

See what I mean?

THEN Mrs. J. Ward of Nottingham said, among other things ".....have you any pictures of Bing and his family? Its years since I saw any.....I have quite a number of Bing's records." Well, we were able to satisfy this request in a modest manner.

MR. C. DENNING, of Spalding, Lincs., joined us too - and like so many others, is looking for Bing's recording of "SECOND TIME AROUND". Odd how extremely rare this record has become; there are dozens of readers searching for it. I was able to tell Mr. Denning, of course, that failing procurement of the record, virtually anything of Bing can be obtained on tape from Bob Roberts (and others, for that matter) details elsewhere. And Bob can now supply cassettes as well as orthodox reel-tape. Readers will appreciate it is a little unrealistic to ask for just one number in such cassette/tape fashion: decide upon a selection that includes, obviously, the songs you want.

Regarding the last issue and the stories of meeting Bing by Bristo and Bassett.....I felt a little apprehensive that readers may, not unnaturally perhaps, feel "All right for them....what about us. We want to meet Bing too...." I would have understood this to an extent: but I grievously misjudged the kindness and generosity of our members!

I was overwhelmed with dozens of letters which said, in effect: Great, we loved the stories - and if anyone deserved to meet Bing it was John and yourself.....

Thank you, friends.

MRS. RITA STROMMINGERS returned to the fold! Writing from Haywards Heath, Sussex: Rita said: "I used to belong to the British Crosby Society - which I presume is the ICC - but lost touch. I was, therefore, pleased to hear your name and address on the Teddy Johnson programme...." We're glad you did Rita; it's nice to have you back where you belong!

THERE WAS ONE STARTLING FEATURE OF TEDDY JOHNSON'S REMARKS ON THE RADIO ABOUT THE ICC: HE SAID WE WERE UNDOUBTEDLY THE DADDY OF THEM ALL (WHICH WE MODESTLY ADMIT!) AND ADDED THAT WE HAD UPWARDS OF 10,000 MEMBERS! NOW WHERE TEDDY GOT THAT ASTRONOMICAL FIGURE FROM WE CANNOT IMAGINE - unless he had heard about this elusive gentleman, Mr. Peter Murphy of Liverpool who sent a message to Frank Bough on the BBC TV Grandstand programme which had Bing as a guest with greetings from "10,000 members of the Crosby fan club." Our membership is a mere fraction of that figure, though we don't doubt that sufficient publicity could one day bring us 10,000 members! Then perhaps yours truly could think of making a full-time job of organising things instead of using my spare time 100 per cent - and going to my full-time job with the Min. of Defence!

And in reply to many readers I have to say that I do not know Mr. Peter Murphy. And I know nothing of his activities or his Crosby club. I would like to, naturally, for clearly we have a lot in common!

=====

ROY BISSELL, 26 Charlotte Rd., Wednesbury, West Midlands, WS10 7NE: Roy was one of the lucky dozen who DID get a copy of the last issue. He writes:

I must write and thank you for my first copy of the ICC's BING, BING NO.37. I found it a most interesting magazine - and I must tell you this! I went to our local market and picked up an LP of Bing with Rosemary Clooney - RENDEZVOUS - for 50p! I found it a remarkable record with a terrific backing - but there is no information as to the band! This plays quite a part in this fine record. May I advertise for BING'S HOLLYWOOD, NOS. 10 and 12 please? in good condition. I have vintage 78 Brunswicks to offer in exchange, including a "Crosby Christmas" - the fairly rare recording of all the family singing with Bing. I can also offer the LP BELOVED HYMNS (Ace of Hearts) for, particularly, BING 12 (Sunshine Cake").

Well, the band on RENDEZVOUS was a joint-effort by Billy May and Buddy Cole, tho' the former took the major part in the direction. And regarding advertisements for records &c. it would be appreciated if advertisers sent their requirements to John Bassett, the Editor so that they can all appear in one place under Crosby Shoppe. It is appreciated that in the case of new members we must accommodate them where we can....

=====

Another new member writes from an extremely "musical" address: Mr. M.W.GARRATT, The White Horse Inn...Burford...John Hanson lost out to Bing!

=====

Ah, the feminine touch we were talking about: MRS. ELIZABETH COOMBER, of East Grinstead, heard the broadcast and wrote:

Please send details of how I can become a member of the Circle. I have been a fan of his for the last 30 years and my most treasured possession is his photograph which I sent for when I was still at school. It still hangs in my home.....

=====

Other members who are reading their first BING include Miss Carole Duxbury, of Preston, Lancs; Sean McPartland of Bournemouth; Mrs. H.J.Moss of Brislington, Bristol; Mr. D.W. Cook of Broadstone, Dorset; Miss S.M.Davey of Blaina, Gwent (just a few miles from Gynbrân and Blaina is noted for its singers, past and present, in South Wales); Mr. J.H. Abraham of Clifton, Bristol; Mr. J.H.Parks of Portishead, Bristol; Mr. G.W.Hill(Snr), of Hartburn, Stockton-on-Tees; Raymond Dunn of Goole, Yorkshire; Miss K. Macklen, Taunton, Somerset; Amanda Denton-Hawkes of Solihull, West Midlands; Mr. R.E.Leach, of Hemel Hempstead. We extend our usual warm welcome to all new members and hope they will make full use of what the ICC has to offer. Modest advertising is completely free - so lets make Crosby Shoppe as large and varied as possible. I think the letter from Carole Duxbury is another we should print as it enhances a little further the feminine angle we have, perhaps, been neglecting. Carole wrote:

(Cont.

"Being seventeen years old I missed most of Mr. Crosby's career but I am a great fan of his and have been for a long time. He is very talented as an actor and singer and I buy all his records and watch all his films. He is obviously a very charming and a very modest man despite this and is still continuing to bring great pleasure to myself, and I am sure, very many other people. I want to become a member of his "circle".

Carole Duxbury.

A lovely assessment from a 17-year-old....takes years off me!

Congratulations too, Carole, on your beautifully neat handwriting!

PENITENT'S CORNER:

The broadcast, as I've indicated, brought me some unusual mail: yet another was from a gentleman in Redditch who did NOT want to join us, but said -

"Over the years I have been fortunate enough to collect a very large (and now quite price less) set of autographs and personally signed photographs of many of the world's greatest artistes.

However, one of my great regrets is that I have never been lucky enough to obtain Mr. Bing Crosby's personal signature, and as he is a legend in his own life-time my collection can never be complete until I succeed. I have written on a number of occasions to him but, sadly, no luck. I would be most grateful for any information in my mission to include this wonderful artist in my collection."

I think it's possible that Bing's autograph is now in this gentleman's collection, but personally, unless one is present when the great man signs there seems to be little point in it. What do you think? An autograph obtained personally is a great and vivid souvenir of a tremendous event; but must lose a lot of its impact when it is obtained from a distance. Still, such an autograph is probably better than nothing.

I am suitably chastened by yet another new member - from the States this time - Ted Schoenburg of 40 Lafayette Avenue, Beacon, NEW YORK who writes:

Mr. Bristo: Don't be too harsh in your criticism of Frank Sinatra. After all, its a singer like Sinatra who, in his performances unintentionally underlines by virtue of comparison, the fact that Bing is still the greatest.

Thank you Ted; you're so right. But, do I really "criticise" Frankie boy? A little gentle irony perhaps? However, I'll stick to facts this time: For all those interested Frank Sinatra has arrived in this country (perhaps he's gone by now) for another series of "Farewell" performances. One of his bodyguard stated at London Airport, in reply to a question from a newspaper man, that a photographer had been punched, no, he hadn't been punched if only for the fact that he was speaking. Anyone punched by a member of "the bodyguard" couldn't talk for a month afterwards.

How to make friends - quickly.

But bodyguard? Bing's bodyguard at Bond Street? Must have been ol' Leslie Gaylor...

Please note: the above is factual reporting.

Many of our newer readers showed their calibre as Crosby admirers by the kind of records they are looking for! MRS. H.J. MOSS, 56 Collin Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 3SD for instance shows exquisite vintage taste in asking "I wonder if you could tell me where I can get Bing's record of "Beautiful Dreamer", and also of "Buddy Can You Spare a Dime?"

Both records, alas, terribly difficult to come by in their original 78rpm form; and little easier on micro-groove (LP) though the great news is that BEAUTIFUL DREAMER will be included on the mammoth 7-album set coming from WORLD RECORDS in August. I feel certain the very varied repertoire of this set has been dealt with in depth earlier in this issue.

As we are all too well aware, inflation carries on apace: the savage postal increases are a blow - but happily, thanks to many readers (who wish to remain anonymous!) we are NOT taking the step so many thought inevitable, and that is increasing the annual subs. which remain at £1.50 per annum (or four issues, usually the same thing of course). The last postal increase put 10p per member on the annual bill for posting the mag alone, and ignoring our considerable postage bill for correspondence!

1944

If only because 1944 fell between that traumatic era of 1939-45, the Second World War of course, it would have its secure niche in posterity. The fantastic Allied invasion of Europe had begun in June of that year, and after weary years the end of the War seemed to be in sight, With the last-ditch V1's and V2's cascading on to London and the south generally that end couldn't come too soon...

It was also the year that Bing Crosby visited Britain and Europe generally for the first time - an event, in truth, we had begun to think would never happen.

Bing had been a unique star then; in 1944, for at least a dozen years and those years had seen a cascade of both gramophone records and films - as we are all well aware. The clamour for Bing to visit Britain where, then as now, he was fantastically popular, had last^{ed} virtually all through those years. The great American stars had begun to cross the Atlantic for brief but spectacular visits - Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, Morton Downey, the Street Singer, the Mills Brothers, the Boswell Sisters, and many others all came to star at the London Palladium, give concerts, and then to briefly tour the principal provincial towns.

But Bing was never able to make the trip pre-War.

It was easy to appreciate - and this was often stated at the time - that his commitments in America with records, radio, and especially films were so continuous and so demanding it just could not be fitted in. But the War, which changed the life of almost everybody (then and now!) brought a dramatic change.

Britain in 1944 seem^{ed} literally full of American servicemen; the American Forces Network had been instituted but on the lines of our own ENSA, there was a demand for "live" entertainment on a vast scale. And, of course, the top stars were only too anxious to play their part.

In September of 1944, the long-awaited invasion mounted in June, was well under way and Allied troops were on their historic race to Berlin - and three of the greatest luminaries in the world of entertainment followed closely in their wake - and the greatest of them all was - BING CROSBY.

The others were Fred Astaire and Glenn Miller.

Bing has, naturally, dealt with this first visit to war-torn Britain and Europe in his book - and in many interviews, incidentally. Now we've had the great good fortune to come into possession of a contemporary report of Bing's arrival in this country - and it couldn't have come from a finer source. The MELODY MAKER was the musician's paper in those days, as it remains, albeit of an entirely different calibre these days. We feel the reports of its correspondents in the issue dated week-ending September 2, 1944 will be of consuming interest to our readers. The MELODY MAKER, like all newspapers and periodicals at that time, were extremely austere and "utility" and much reduced in size. A small part of the frontpage is reproduced (it is hoped!) on our "cuttings" page but the paper is too fragile and faint to bear complete reproduction. For that reason, the whole of the features in that MM are being reproduced by being re-typed but exactly as printed in 1944.

It will give an extraordinarily graphic impression to all - those who were in fact around at that time (albeit in a different occupation and uniform!) - and to those of our members who hadn't even been born by 1944!

To cross the Atlantic still threatened by U-boats - to arrive in a still blacked-out Britain - and to immediately undertake the train journey from Glasgow (where, you will remember, he was astonished to see a gentleman in a top-hat controlling the crowd - the "stytiomawster" in fact) to London can never have been the arrival in Britain envisaged for Bing over the years. But that's the way it turned out. The reports from the MM begin on the next page.

MELODY MAKER
3d Incorporating "Rhythm"

Week Ending September 2,
1944.

Every Thursday:

Vol. XX No. 580

HE'S HERE!

BING CROSBY ARRIVES

BING CROSBY IS HERE! The world's greatest popular singer—stated to pull down £225,000 a year—has arrived in this country to entertain the troops, and the MELODY MAKER takes a modest bow for being the very first paper to report that he was coming.

In last week's issue we told you he would be arriving any day now, and that he would broadcast to Home listeners.

Our information was pretty good. He arrived a day after the "MM" was issued, and he duly sang to Home listeners in "Variety Band Box" last Tuesday.

A full report of the broadcast by our Editor, who watched it being recorded, is on page 3 of this issue.

Bing arrived in Glasgow last Friday night (25th), and after being mobbed on the railway station by a crowd of women porters, who induced him to sing "Blue of the Night" and "Glasgow Belongs to Me", climbed into a sleeper, and knew no more till, he told us, "They hit me with a pot of tea around 7.30 in the morning."

Bronzed, blue-eyed, 40-year-old Bing has with him a company of six—comedian JOE DE RITA, guitarist BUCK HARRIS, accordionist EARL BAXTER, and two glamour girls to provide the feminine song and dance attraction.

He has a great admiration for Dinah Shore, who he claims is the top in her line of business, and from English artists selected Ambrose and his Orchestra and the late Al Bowlly as his favourites. Bob Hope also urged him to listen to Tommy Handley's "Itma" programme.

Europe is to have the benefit of the Crosby pipes till November, when his contract requires him to return to California.

He still can't read music, and does not have a piano in his suite, as he claims there is no-one to play it.

Golf is his favourite sport and Bing hopes to play on St. Andrews and other famous courses if he has time.

Bing Crosby claims he has never really made a song popular except some of those he sings in movies. He said: "I just wait around till I see

Cont. over...

LETTERS
PAGE

THE NEWS AND YOU Write to Re

HELLO JOE...
Bing calls out
of the blue

WHEN Bing Crosby was in London a police officer told him about a friend who is a Crosby fan living in the London district of Bow and who, after a major operation, was disabled.

At nine o'clock the next morning Bing was on the telephone to the disabled man cheering him up, chatting about records, discussing mutual medical experiences.

The story would never have been known had the man himself not written to a newspaper about it.

A tiny gesture on Bing's part? Of course. But can you imagine the happiness it brought into one humble life? Can you also imagine any of the present brand of top actors acting like that?

JUST imagine answering the phone at 9 a.m., then finding yourself talking to Bing Crosby. This happened to me. I knew he was over here, I had seen him on TV interviews and heard him on Pete Murray's radio programme.

Bing had received a letter from a friend of mine Inspector Bert Day of Marylebone Police Court, telling him I was disabled and could not get around very well.

So Bing decided to cheer me up by ringing me.

We had a lengthy chat about records and compared our medical experiences and operations amid bursts of laughter from Bing who

discovered we had similar troubles.

It's amazing how this man, who has sold more records than anyone else in the world, can put you at your ease.

The fact that he bothered to ring me at all still fills me with wonder. — J. HALL, British Street, Bow.

Inspector Day said today: "Joe has been a friend of Bing's for years

and I thought a phone call from him would do Joe the world of good.

"Bing maintains close contact with his fans. I've been collecting his records since 1935—I've got over 3,000—and have exchanged letters and spoken to him many times."

16 SEPTEMBER 2, 1944

Melody
Maker3 INCORPORATING
RHYTHM

EVERY THURSDAY Vol. XX No. 580

AMBROSE TO
ENTERTAIN TROOPS
IN FRANCE

THE "MELODY MAKER" LEARNS OFFICIALLY THAT AMBROSE AND HIS ORCHESTRA ARE SCHEDULED TO UNDERTAKE AN E.N.S.A. TOUR AMONG OUR FRONT-LINE TROOPS IN FRANCE AT AN EARLY DATE.

The brilliant appreciation which Ambrose will take with him will include a band of over twenty of the finest musicians in the country, plus a company of brilliant singers and entertainers, headed by popular favourites, Anna Shelton and Eileen Daff.

HE'S HERE!

Bing Crosby
Arrives

BING CROSBY IS HERE! THE WORLD'S GREATEST POPULAR SINGER STATED TO PULL DOWN £275,000 A YEAR HAS ARRIVED IN THIS COUNTRY TO ENTERTAIN THE TROOPS AND THE "MELODY MAKER" TAKES A MODEST BOW FOR BEING THE VERY FIRST PAPER TO REPORT THAT HE WAS COMING.

In last week's issue we told you he would be arriving in the next week, and that he would broadcast to Home Forces.

Our information was pretty good. He arrived a day after the "M.M." was closed, and he did come to Home Forces in "Variety Band Box" last Friday.

A full report of the broadcast by our Editor, who watched it before he returned, is on page 2 of this issue.

Bing arrived in Glasgow last Friday night at 11, and after being rushed on the railway station by a crowd of women, who induced him to sing "Blue Of The Night" and "Gladness Belongs To Me" climbed into a sleeper and knew no more till he told us "The" but he with a pot of tea at 7.30 in the morning. He brought, besides his regular band, has with him a contingent of six comedians Joe de Rita, guitarist Buck Harris, a pianist Earl Baxter, and two famous girls to provide the entertainment and dance attraction.

He has a great admiration for Dinah Shore, who he claims is the top in her line of business, and from English artists selected Ambrose and his Orchestra and the late Al Cowley as his favourites. Bob Hope also urged him to listen to "Variety Band Box."



His "Variety Band Box" recording is being repeated this Sunday night. It is broadcast with...

one beginning to climb then I hop on the band-waggon.

PRESENT FAVOURITE, BY THE WAY, IS "LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY". BING HAS A GREAT AND SINCERE ADMIRATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN ENGLAND WHO HAVE ENDURED THE FLYING-BOMB ATTACKS WITH SUCH EQUANIMITY. HIS YOUNGER BROTHER, BOB, EX-BAND LEADER, IS NOW A SECOND LIEUTENANT IN THE US MARINES SERVING IN THE PACIFIC.

Bing is ever here completely under the control of USO.

His "Variety Band-Box" recording is being repeated this Sunday (Sept 3) and Bing also broadcast with RSM George Melachrino and the British Band of the AEF programme on Wednesday.

TONIGHT, THURSDAY, AT 8.30 PM HE IS AGAIN ON THE AFE WAVELENGTH WITH MAJOR GLENN MILLER'S BAND.

AND THE FULL REPORT ON THE BROADCAST ON PAGE 3 OF THAT "MM" READ LIKE THIS:

BING WENT THE STRINGS OF OUR HEARTS!

A GREAT GUY ENTERTAINS THE TROOPS: BY RAY SONIN

Let me confess freely and unreservedly that I'm a fan! I always have been, but even more so now that I've seen my idol in the flesh, heard him perform and—forgetting that I am pretty plase after years of working with and among popular entertainers—let myself go like a schoolboy, whooping and cheering all over the place, and thoroughly enjoying myself.

The man? Bing Crosby, of course, and I'd like to place on record at once that all of us who have met and seen him agree that a more charming, sociable, kindly and genial guy you could never wish to meet.

All right—so I'm talking like a fan club secretary! So what? This is going to be a rave, and, if you happen to be a collaborationist from the Sinatra camp—well, there are plenty of other things to read in the "MM" this week.

BROADCAST:

The scene was the Queensberry All-Services Club in London last Sunday evening, 27th. It was jam-packed from floor-to ceiling with some 4,000 excited men and women in uniform. The word had gone round—Crosby was going to appear, and khaki-and-blue-clad figures had stood for hours in the hot sunshine (over the Straits of Dover) to get in. As it was, hundreds had to be disappointed, since even the vast Queensberry Club isn't elastic-sided.

Thanks to the courtesy of BBC executive CECIL MADDEN and Queensberry manager JOHN HARDING, I was one of the crowd—and was I excited? I certainly was, and I don't care who knows it.

Six o'clock. The red light on the stage flickered its warning and then glowed steadily.

The BBC announcer told the world "This is Variety Band Box" and we were off

(Cont. over.)

to an hour's recording of this popular broadcast. It was a good show, too. Very lovely Pat Kirkwood was the commere and I go for that mademoiselle in large quantities. She was gay, charming, announced the items with the right degree of gusto and, when she did her solo piece, really slayed the audience.

A special bouquet for her rendering of "Jenny"; its the first time I've ever really heard the words. GERALDO and his Concert Orchestra were on the stage, and very nice they sounded, too, especially when Sid Bright played the solo piano in the "Warsaw Concerto" and received a well-deserved roof-lifting ovation.

ROCKERICK JONES sang, so did OLIVE GROVES, and composer MANNING SHERWIN played a selection of his own compositions while the audience whistled away his well-known melodies very cheerfully.

Then we had TOMMY HANDLEY, who was in very good form, and got some real belly-laughs. Best gag was his description of a meal which included "Hamburger Pas de Calais—a flying sausage with a lighted match stuck in the end"!

And then Tommy's voice took on an exciting, serious, note. He announced the next artist, and before the words were out of his mouth the audience rose—for there he was,....the one and only Bing Crosby—the man whose voice has brought pleasure and sanity into every corner of a mad world at war.

HE BOUNDED ON TO THE STAGE, BEAMING, AND STOOD THERE WHILE THE BIGGEST RECEPTION EVER ACCORDED TO AN ARTIST IN MY MEMORY THUNDERED THROUGH THE VAST HALL.

The minutes ticked by but the volume of sound didn't diminish, even though producer STEPHEN WILLIAMS vainly tried to stem the tide.

Finally order was restored, and Tommy Handley welcomed Bing to England and presented him with a pipe, to which Bing made the I.T.Mortal rejoinder: "Well, isn't that NICE! What is it?" And so the badinage went to and fro until Bing ejaculated: "Well! For ever more!" and the stage was clear and it was song time.

Accompanying him at the piano was JAMES RUSIN—second pianist of the Glenn Miller Band and a smashing ivory-tickler. Bing and Rusin had never met before that show.

BING GAGS: They had not rehearsed—just talked over the numbers for a few minutes beforehand—and neither of them had any music. But it didn't matter. Rusin is a first-class pianist, able to tackle anything, and Bing is no slouch either.

Oh, but I'm running ahead! The fem-fans are dying to know what Bing looks like—and here am I talking music!

WELL, HE LOOKS MUCH YOUNGER IN THE FLESH THAN HE DOES ON THE FILMS, AND HE'S MUCH SLIMMER. HE'S BALDISH, BUT NOT GLEAMINGLY SO, AND HE'S TALLER THAN YOU IMAGINE. HIS EYES ARE JUST ABOUT THE MOST VIVID BLUE I'VE EVER SEEN, AND HIS TIE WAS PRETTY VIVID TOO!

Then he sang—and I don't have to tell you what THAT was like. First, "San Fernando Valley" then (what a gasp of joy when he announced it!) "Long Ago and Far Away" and finally, in response to requests, "Moonlight Becomes You". He said he wasn't sure of the words of that one so, in the middle, he suddenly sang "Does anyone know the words of this song?" and it fitted the music, and it was terrific.

And so, with a nice little speech from Bing to the boys fighting overseas, the

broadcast ended amidst tumultuous applause, and we all sat back well satisfied.

But there was more to come. After an interval, Bing sportingly came back and gave the boys and girls of the Forces half an hour's entertainment—and that really WAS something. He gagged with comic Joe de Vita about Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra, and pulled two of the best cracks I've heard in years.

One was when he announced that he and Sinatra were going to form a double act to go on the halls after the War under the name of "Breathless and Hairless". The other concerned Bob Hope. He said:

"You know, Bob and I are really great pals. There's nothing in the world that I wouldn't do for Bob Hope, and there's nothing that Bob wouldn't do for me. And that's how we both go through life—doing nothing for each other!"

But in between all this we had a surprise item. Bing announced that he was going to bring a young lady on the stage whom he believed we liked. He had never heard her sing but he was told that she was the Dinah Shore of this country, and he wanted us to give her a big hand.

Well, when he announced her name as ANNE SHELTON there was no need to ask for a "big hand". She got it—a tremendous reception, and one I think that even startled Bing—who obviously can't be expected to know how our vocalists rate with us.

Anne looked as excited as any of us. It was a brainwave of Cecil Madden's that brought her there after broadcasting her own programme, "Anne to You" and how the audience appreciated it! She sang "I'll Get By" very charmingly then—without any rehearsal—she gagged around with Bing as if she'd been doing it all her life. But when Bing said: "How about you and me singing a duet together?" Anne just looked into those vivid blue eyes heretofore mentioned and breathed: "I've dreamed of this moment all my life!" And it wasn't an act either; we could see she meant it.

SO THEY SANG "EASTER PARADE"—AMERICA'S BING CROSBY AND BRITAIN'S ANNE SHELTON, AND ANNE DIDN'T LET THE OLD COUNTRY DOWN. FAR FROM IT. HER VOICE BLENDED BEAUTIFULLY WITH HIS, SHE COPIED HIS TWIDDLEY-BITS AGAINST THE MELODY, AND IT WAS A REALLY TERRIFIC PERFORMANCE.

Finally, in response to shouts from all over the house, Bing sang "White Christmas" and the show was over and we came out into the crowded streets of Soho with thousands of people milling around to see the star leave.

Now, what is the secret of Bing Crosby? Well, it is amazingly relaxed personality that gets you. There is nothing studied or artificial about his movements, his speech or his singing. He's just a natural good guy—and he's essentially masculine.

It was interesting to note that men and girls alike were completely captivated by him. Tough commandos and burly sergeant-majors were among those who yelled out for him to sing "White Christmas", not hysterical girls.

And outside, it wasn't what we used to call "flappers" who waited to see him. No—men and women of all ages and all nationalities. It seems that the whole world loves Bing.

Later that evening Bing was dining at Kettners Restaurant in Soho when the crowds recognised his car standing outside. They chanted: "We want Bing!" until finally he came on the balcony and sang "Pennies from Heaven" to the thousands of people below. Nor was this all, for as it was getting dark the crowds assembled again

and called him out. This time he sang them eight songs before they would disperse, and they shone their torches on him as he sang....Of all the Hollywood scenes in which Bing has figured, surely none can compare with the artistry and humanity of this one.....

Well, there we are. Anne Shelton said everything when I asked her what she thought of him and she replied: "HE IS JUST ABOUT THE GREATEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED."

In a nation war-weary and war-torn, with "doodle-bugs" still reminding us that the end is not yet, Bing has brought a breath of peace-time atmosphere--a reminder that there are other things in the world to get excited about than battles.

And that evening did more for transatlantic relationship than a hundred speeches.

Thanks, Bing!

Thus, a graphic, first-hand report of the impact Bing made when he visited Britain for the very first time - and our acknowledgements to the MELODY MAKER. The paper carried two pictures - one of them very approximately reproduced in our "cuttings" page, together with the way the story actually looked - and the other showed Bing sitting at a table conducting a press conference and looking very happy at the questions being fired at him. It embraces a first-hand report of that lovely tie-up with our Anne Shelton, known to most of us for years on tape and included, of course, in the recent story of Bing on BBC radio.

It is now almost 31 years since that first historic visit - and it is readily apparent that the things that were said then are still being said, with perhaps even more profundity today. "White Christmas" was demanded then - two years only after it first appeared - and it still is, today. And you will notice how delighted the writer for MM was when Bing "forgot the words" and filled in in perfect, rhythmic, fashion....and how Bing teamed-up with a pianist quite unknown to him for a perfect broadcast.

And it perhaps helps to understand how Bing feels about Britain; and of what may have been in his mind when he wrote the following Christmas message to us in 1972:

IT SEEMS THAT EVERY TIME I GO TO ENGLAND, I AM ABLE TO MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS, AND AT THE SAME TIME HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT SOME OF THE LOYAL SUPPORTERS WHO HAVE BEEN WITH ME FOR SO MANY YEARS.....

GREAT NEWS!

A NEW, IN-DEPTH BIOGRAPHY OF BING HAS LONG BEEN WANTED TO AUGMENT BING'S "CALL ME LUCKY". Many readers may have spotted

the really intriguing paragraphs in the Daily Mirror about the 90,000-word biography that is being written of Bing by Charles Thompson, the man who met Bing when he was preparing the mammoth 14-weekly instalment radio life-story of Bing. It has been reported that Bing has twice read the manuscript and added copious notes and a tape-recorded addition.

This sounds in-depth enough for anyone! If there are any reservations (and of course, there should be none for such a great project!) it is that the author is 30-years-of age! Let's hope Mr. Thompson can, in the event, recapture some of the tremendous aura of Bing's early 30's career. Certainly Chas. Thompson was in a very privileged position when given the job of researching and preparing the radio series.

We are endeavouring to find out more about this very attractive project - by whom and when it will be published; is it well-illustrated, does it contain any discographical matter - sadly lacking in CALL ME LUCKY! - and so forth?

SAIGON SERENADE

No! Not a new song title.... but how the most famous, the most familiar, voice in the world was put to a new use....

Most of us, no doubt, sat captive in our chairs as television brought into our homes the end of the War that had lasted on and off for 30 years in the ill-fated country of Vietnam.

The terrifying scenes of terrified people running, running, reaching one refuge only to find there was no resting place surely brought some of the most vivid and compelling television ever; it was clear that some of the commentating and filming crews were exposed to front-line conditions of the most desperate kind. And now you will, with reason, be asking what on earth has Vietnam, or Saigon, got to do with The International Crosby Circle?

Well, fear not! We are not going "political"; the Crosby brotherhood has shewn every sign of being completely non-political, non-sectarian, non-allied to anything except abiding interest in the career and activities of the peerless Bing. And it will always remain so. Yet, in the final desperate days of the Vietnam war, the voice of Bing Crosby was utilised in a quite unique way: not to entertain as always hitherto but as a code - a code, no doubt, it was felt that EVERYONE would understand and recognise.

Like most newspapers, THE SUNDAY TIMES carried graphic reports of those final days, and on Sunday, May 4, last their star Vietnam reporter, Philip Jacobson described the last hours in Saigon before the final evacuation took place:

".....the dining-room was very quiet for a moment after seeing from the hotel a flying boxcar cargo plane hit squarely by a Sam missile. It was clear the enemy was very close to the airport....then an American reporter said what we were all thinking: 'There's going to be a lot of juicy targets when the 'choppers come in.'

"For the next few hours, discussing whether to stay put or chance the helicopters, I changed my mind half-a-dozen times. The risk of staying, we all agreed, came less from the invading communists than from the danger of the South Vietnamese troops turning nasty at the end.

"In the end, most of us decided to leave when we discovered that the first phase of the air-lift by helicopters would also be the last. 'Look fellows,' an American Embassy official confided 'there ain't gonna be no second thoughts on this circus.' In theory, we were still waiting for the prearranged code for gathering at evacuation points-- an announcement on the American radio station about the Saigon temperature followed by a few bars of 'White Christmas'. The Japanese journalists were very worried about whether they would recognise the tune and kept asking us to sing it for them. Few of us knew more than the first couple of verses. In fact, the word when it came was spread by a process which I recall is known to biologists as osmosis, although a few believers did hang on until Bing Crosby's voice came over the air. By this time, the air was full of Chinook helicopters and the lift was well and truly under way....."

=====

I find it hard to believe that even the Japanese journalists were afraid they wouldn't recognise Bing singing his immortal song, even in those incongruous circumstances. There can be little doubt that the American authorities deliberately chose Bing's great recording as being immediately and universally recognisable.

Thus, Bing's "Saigon Serenade" - sadly, however, delivered in what surely must have been the most unromantic or even the most unhappy circumstances. But it once again illustrates the unique and all-embracing significance of the world's greatest singer of popular song....

I wonder if Bing knew that his voice was used as the code-sign for the final evacuation of Saigon?

=====



BING AND HIS BODYGUARD! BING AND LESLIE GAYLOR IN LONDON:

Smart men about town!

Leslie is tireless in his effort on behalf of Crosbyana and it is due to his efforts that so many "loners" find their way to the ICC.



MEN ABOUT THE GOLF-COURSE!

KEITH PARKINSON, OUR FILMS EXPERT IS ON THE EXTREME LEFT OF THIS HAPPY CROWD OF COURSE-FOLLOWERS: IT LOOKS AS IF BING HAS BEEN SET A FEW PROBLEMS - HOW TO STEER THE BALL THRO' THE CROWD, NO DOUBT.

(PICTURE TAKEN AT SOUTHPORT A SUMMER OR SO BACK)

THE SEVEN-ALBUM TITLES !

The question of participation in the pages of BING has cropped up several times in this issue: and that's good. Yet, in their way, they are playing an excellent part.

It was, for instance, SYLVIA LAWRENCE of Cambridge and PAT FORSTER of Twickenham, who were first off the mark in telling us what the titles are on the package to be issued by WORLD RECORDS. I know hordes of readers are very anxious to know them so here they are: the package will, of course, be well discussed in our next issue and it will save us the job (and space!) of repeating them then if you retain this list:

=====

"BING'S HIT PARADE" Record 1:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Where the blue of the Night (1940) | 1. Be Honest with Me. (1941) |
| 2. Stardust (1939) | 2. Anniversary Waltz (1941) |
| 3. I Surrender, Dear (1939) | 3. You Are My Sunshine (1941) |
| 4. S'posing (1939) | 4. The Whiffenpoof Song (1947) |
| 5. Wrap your troubles in dreams (1939) | 5. I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue eyes (1942) |
| 6. Ol' Man River (1955) | 6. Deep in the heart of Texas (1942) |
| 7. Shoe Shine Boy (1936) | 7. Far Away Places (1948) |
| 8. If I Had my Way (1939) | 8. Dear Hearts and Gentle People (1949) |
| 9. It Must be True (1939) | |

Record 2:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Going my Way. (1944) | 1. Darling, Je vois aime Beaucoup (1941) |
| 2. In A Little Spanish Town. | 2. Basin St. Blues (1937) |
| 3. A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square (1940) | 3. San Antonio Rose (1940) |
| 4. Blue Hawaii (1937) | 4. East Side of Heaven (1939) |
| 5. Home on the Range (1939) | 5. Missouri Waltz (1939) |
| 6. Marcheta (1940) | 6. Hoots Mon (1952) |
| 7. I'll Si-ya in Bahia (1952) | 7. I'll See you in Cuba (1952) |
| 8. Cirribiribin (1939) | 8. Did Your mother come from Ireland? (1940) |

Record 3:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Please (1940) | 1. I've Got a pocketful of Dreams (1938) |
| 2. Pennies from Heaven (1936) | 2. Sing a song of sunbeams (1939) |
| 3. Sweet Leilani (1937) | 3. Only Forever (1940) |
| 4. Down by the River (1935) | 4. Love is just around the Corner (1934) |
| 5. I Wished on the Moon (1935) | 5. Swinging on a star. (1944) |
| 6. Moonburn (1935) | 6. Accentuate the positive (1944) |
| 7. The Moon Got in my Eyes (1937) | 7. In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening |
| 8. On the Sentimental Side (1938) | 8. The Pessemistic Character (1940) (1951) |

Record 4: "Bing's Evergreens".

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Lily of Laguna (1942) | 1. Down by the old Mill Stream (1939) |
| 2. Wait Till the sun shines Nellie (1942) | 2. In My merry Oldsmobile (1939) |
| 3. By the Light of the Silvery Moon (1942) | 3. (a) Schooldays (b) Sunbonnet Sue (c) Jimmie Valentine (d) If I Were A Millionaire (1939) |
| 4. Mary's a grand old name. (1941) | 4. Moonlight Bay (1951) |
| 5. You Made me Love You. (1940) | 5. Sweethearts (1938) |
| 6. My Melancholy Baby (1938) | 6. Beautiful Dreamer (1940) |
| 7. Let me call you Sweetheart (1934) | 7. Just A'wearying for you. (1934) |
| 8. Ida, Sweet as apple cider (1952) | 8. I Dream of Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair (1940) |

Record 5: "BING SINGS BERLIN"

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Blue Skies. (1946) | 1. White Christmas (1942) |
| 2. All By Myself (1946) | 2. Lazy (1942) |
| 3. I've Got My Captain Working For me Now | 3. When I Lost You (1942) |
| 4. You Keep Coming Back Like a Song (1946) | 4. Now It Can be Told (1938) |
| 5. Getting Nowhere (1946) | 5. A Serenade to an old-Fashioned Girl (1946) |
| 6. Everybody Step (1946) | 6. Alexander's Ragtime Band (1947) |
| 7. Be Careful, Its my Heart. | 7. I'll Capture Your Heart (1942) |
| 8. Easter Parade (1942) | 8. Play A Simple Melody (1950) |

===== (Cont. over.....)

Record 6: BING TAKES TO THE ROAD

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Too Romantic (1939) | 1. Moonlight Becomes You (1942) |
| 2. The Moon & The Willow Tree (1939) | 2. Would You (1944) |
| 3. Sweet Potato Piper (1939) | 3. It's Anybody's Spring (1944) |
| 4. It's Always You (1940) | 4. Welcome to my Dreams (1944) |
| 5. You Lucky People You (1940) | 5. But Beautiful (1946) |
| 6. Birds of a Feather (1940) | 6. You Don't Have to know the Language (1946) |
| 7. The Road to Morocco (1944) | 7. Chicago Style (1952) |
| 8. Ain't Got A Dime to my Name (1942) | 8. Merry-go-Round (1952) |

Record 7: BING CROSBY AND HIS FRIENDS AND FAMILY

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Small Fry (1938) | 1. Busy Doing Nothing (1948) |
| 2. Start the Day Right (1939) | 2. Sing a Little Song (1952) |
| 3. Yodelling Jive (1939) | 3. Gipsy Love Song (1938) |
| 4. Dolores (1940) | 4. A Fine Romance (1936) |
| 5. The Waiter & the Porter & The Upstairs Maid (1941) | 5. Sam's Song (1950) |
| 6. Gone Fishin' (1951) | 6. The Spaniard That Blighted my Life (1947) |
| 7. A Couple of Song & Dance Men (1946) | 7. Yah-Ta-Tah (1945) |
| 8. Back in the old Routine (1953) | 8. Put It There Pal. (1944) |

=====

We'll attempt no review at this stage - but offer just a few comments. Certainly there is a lot that is familiar to us: but tracks such as BEAUTIFUL DREAMS, SERENADE TO AN OLD FASHIONED GIRL, OL' MAN RIVER, DOLORES, GONE FISHIN', FAR AWAY PLACES, NIGHTINGALE SANG IN BERKELEY SQUARE, MARCHOTA, MISSOURI WALTZ, MOTHER COME FROM IRELAND and many others are far from easy to get nowadays - the whole thing represents a fantastic programme of melody, wide-ranging versatility of Bing, a wonderful study in dates (included, you will notice are many of Bing's early 30s hits re-made in the more mature style of the late 30s and 40s - there is a fair slice of Bing's film songs to help those who are pining for a reissue of BING'S HOLLYWOOD 1-15 - there is a whole host of Bing's duettists including Fred Astaire, Judy Garland, Gary Crosby, Bob Hope, Andrews Sisters, Connie Boswell, Johnny Mercer, Louis Armstrong - another number that will delight a lot of people is GYPSY LOVE SONG, that beautiful duet with Frances Langford. A truly wonderful package for everyone; invaluable to new and younger collectors. AND, if the prospect of buying seven LPs is a daunting financial prospect (and in these days it may well be for a lot of us - remember these package sets can always be obtained on terms. We could easily devote a whole issue delving into this treasure: perhaps we WILL! As we go to press the price of the package is not known: but, unlike Bing's HOLLYWOOD issue, these records will not be available singly. One can imagine there will be a handsome booklet to go with it, too. And surely it's a wonderful cross-section of Bing Crosby's colossal record output. One hundred and thirteen tracks in one fell swoop!

=====

Miss Amanda Denton-Hawkes, 91 Silihull Hall Rd, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1JT wants to get hold of GONE FISHIN' if anyone can help....John Boswell, "Tina's" 226/228 High Rd., Chadwell Heath, Romford, RM6 6LS, like many others, is finding SECOND TIME AROUND and INCURABLY ROMANTIC very difficult to come by....help wanted.

=====

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE SINATRA MUSIC SOCIETY and its magazine, PERFECTLY FRANK, write to Mrs. Beryl Overbury, 60 Highland Way, Redditch, Worcs. B98 7RH - and you couldn't write to a nicer gal! Enclose SAE.

=====

A NON-BING REQUIREMENT: JO STAFFORD records wanted by TOM COLBORN, 5-H Peabody Estate, Herne Hill, LONDON, S.E.24 - and he wants to hear from anyone interested in Jo - I wonder if he's seen the Rediffusion album by Joe entitled DID ANYONE HEAR A WALTZ?

=====

WE SAY HAPPY WELCOME TO MORE NEW MEMBERS FURTHER TO THOSE ALREADY MENTIONED: JACK LISTER, Lancaster; Fred Tilt, Bromsgrove, Worcs; Mr. S. Coppen, Dagenham, Essex; SYLVIA CRELLIN, Morden, Surrey; MARTIN MATHER, West Moors, Dorset...I do hope I haven't missed anyone. If I have, my apologies....

=====

TO THOSE WHO WANT TO ATTEND THE PARKINSON/BING TV SHOW: AS SOON AS YOU HEAR ON RADIO OR SEE IN THE PAPERS THAT BING IS HERE WRITE TO: PARKINSON TV., BBC TV., CENTRE, WOOD LANE, LONDON W12 - enclose SAE! Asking for a ticket, of course!!

BING PEOPLE

- the nearest we want to get to a "gossip" column!

=====

Joe Hall of Bow, the subject of our "cuttings page, is a member of ICC we're delighted to say. We didn't know Joe was sick and wish him well and better health. Bert Day is a name very well known to us, mainly from the CROSBY COLLECTOR days; we regret that he has not thrown in his Crosby lot with us - but who knows? We loved his action in getting Bing to telephone Joe; a lovely gesture by Bert and by Bing. You will recall Bing also telephoned Bert Bishop....

MRS. SYLVIA LAWRENCE of Cambridge has passed to me a hard-cover copy of the READERS DIGEST volume that contains the condensed version of CALL ME LUCKY with the wish it be sold on behalf of our postage fund! It is brand-new, still in its cellophane wrapper. Anyone interested - drop me REG BRISTO - a line with a reasonable but not astronomical offer....

There was a big story in the SUNDAY EXPRESS of June 2 about Bing; nothing particularly new but illustrating how immensely newsworthy Bing remains....

We were delighted that John Bignell bumped into Mr. Cooper of the Royal Opera House.... another name that is familiar to us but, alas, not in the fold. Mr. Cooper, because of his high-class vocal connections, always intrigued me as a super-Bing fan.....

Reference Editor John's rundown of Crosby records that should be readily available in shops just now; perhaps it should be pointed out that going to Woolworths, Boots, and other large shops which sell records more or less as a side-line is seldom rewarding...if you don't have a specialist record shop (by which I mean one interested in records other than the Top Ten - if you'll pardon the expression) in your area it is recommended you pin your faith to mail-order - and the HMV Shop in Oxford Str. DOES do mail-order....but most towns do have at least one shop where a bit of interest in records above profit is held; they will look up catalogues &c., and order records they don't hold....

YOU WILL HAVE READ THE VERY UNWELCOME NEWS THAT JOHN BASSETT HAS FOUND IT NECESSARY TO RELINQUISH THE EDITORSHIP OF "BING". NO-ONE REGRETS THIS MORE THAN I DO - FOR IT WAS MY HOPE THAT ONE DAY HE WOULD TAKE OVER THE ENTIRE RUNNING OF THE ICC. WE ALL OWE HIM A GREAT DEBT FOR THE STERLING WORK HE HAS PUT IN OVER 4½ YEARS OF EDITING THE MAGAZINE - WHICH REMAINS, OF COURSE, THE MAIN LINK BETWEEN OUR WIDESPREAD MEMBERS. I KNOW ALL MEMBERS WILL JOIN ME IN THANKING JOHN MOST SINCERELY FOR HIS GREAT EFFORTS IN CROSBYANA.

AS JOHN HAS INDICATED, I SHALL ASSUME EDITORSHIP FOR THE TIME BEING. READERS WISHING TO ADVERTISE IN CROSBY SHOPPE ARE ASKED TO PUT THEIR REQUIREMENTS ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER SO THAT THEY MAY BE CONVENIENTLY BE CONSOLIDATED AS A PERMANENT FEATURE OF THE MAG.

AS ALREADY MENTIONED, A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARE READING THEIR FIRST ISSUE OF THE MAG. AND AS JOHN'S FINAL EFFORT WE HAVE TRIED TO DRAW OUR USUAL LINE BETWEEN THE HARD-ROCK DISCOGRAPHICAL CROSBYANA AND THE MORE GENERAL ASPECTS OF ADMIRING THE WORLD'S GREATEST SINGER OF POPULAR SONGS.

WE HOPE IT MEETS WITH APPROVAL, BY BOTH NEW AND OLD MEMBERS.

=====

BING'S 50 YEARS IN SHOW BUSINESS: A truly incomparable career - and how should it be marked? How should it be rewarded? JOHN BIGNELL (once more!) makes no bones about it: BING SHOULD FIGURE IN THE HONOURS LIST!! I believe that normally such recognition is reserved for the British though one or two exceptions have occurred, mostly in the diplomatic field. The name of Sir Douglas Fairbanks comes to mind. But isn't Bing the true INTERNATIONAL figure? Revered in Britain as much, probably more, than anywhere else? BUT HOW DO WE GO ABOUT IT? Shall we all write on these lines - that Bing should be rated British and appear in HM Honours List?. Sounds an excellent idea - shouldn't we go to the fountain-head - the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Wilson? I remember reading, aeons ago, that Mr. Wilson was a Crosby fan of sorts.....I think the possibility's there! Letters to the newspapers on the same lines might be effective, too. It would be a wonderful achievement, and a fitting accolade to the Maestro if we could mount a campaign.

"WHY I WANT TO JOIN

the happy ranks of The International Crosby Circle" And we were certainly told!

Presenting yet another new member making a quite remarkable debut in our pages. Very properly, readers' letters and stories make up a very large part of BING. How could it be otherwise? In the past 12 months we've had most auspicious introductions from such as John Bignell, John Marshall - and certainly our first member from Spain, Carlos Ubach. Now we hear from yet another European country.

To France, Germany, Holland, Spain, Belgium and, of course, Australia, Canada, and America we can add - ITALY! We're not pretending we have hordes of members in all these countries, but we do have at least representative members. One thing most of these overseas members agree on, and this as you will read elsewhere, certainly includes the United States, is that nowhere else is the peerless Bing Crosby followed and admired as he is here in Great Britain. Note the all-embracing Britain, lest our fervent members in Ireland, and Scotland, feel left out! Nowhere else in the world is the admirable cult of Crosbyana so well catered for, I am assured, as it is here...

But to Italy: and our correspondent as you will quickly perceive from his name, is not Italian but has been domiciled in that country since 1944: I imagine that is another story in itself. While I think this story will be of interest to all readers, I feel it may prove of special interest to our younger members for it is so authentic, so redolent, of the magical first decade of Bing Crosby - of what young singers and musicians aspired to, and were inspired by. And it is, of course, Crosby-slanted throughout....and it is, furthermore, a story of a world that came to an abrupt end in September 1939, as did so many worlds. Yet, one feature of those pre-War years survived, and survived handsomely to this very day. The wonderful world, indeed, of Crosbyana.

"VIRTUALLY A LIFE STORY, DOMINATED BY BING....." by

DANIEL
QUINN

Like hordes of others, I became a "fan" of Bing in my early teens - and I remain one although I am now close to sixty as must be many of the members of the ICC. And again like so many others, the first film in which I saw Bing was "The Big Broadcast" in 1932, of OF 1932, when I was 17. The song that really got me - and again I was one of a vast army - was PLEASE. Soon I had the Brunswick 78 which I played again and again on our Columbia (table model) wind-up gramophone. I nearly drove my poor old Dad off his "rocker". He said he couldn't stand "crooners" and that they gave him a bellyache! History, I suppose, repeated itself in due course when my son Danny Jnr. began to play the first records of the Beatles and The Rolling Stones. That nearly drove ME off my rocker!

After I had given the family their fill of PLEASE I'd go around to friends' houses and play it on their gramophones. I think that record must have been ground right down thro' its grooves. From then on I made sure I saw every film that Bing made - and by the time I was 19 I was imitating his style and his voice.

It was at this age that I entered my first "Song Contest" at the then Regal Cinema, Edmonton North, London. At that time - 1933/35 - it was the most modern cinema of the time, with electronically-opening main doors, a revolving stage, a band-pit which came up to stage level, etc. Such things are nothing today but then it was unique. This cinema could hold between two and three thousand people. That at least is unusual these days!

The song I chose was, naturally, one of Bings: WITH EVERY BREATH I TAKE. There were about 12 of us in that heat of the competition, all singers, and for me it was the first-time ever in public. Two of us were to be selected to go forward to the next heat which

would be the final. I got thro' my heat easily with my song that first evening - the winner being judged on the volume of applause. However, although only two of us were due to go forward the audience seemed to give equal acclaim to three of us so we all went on to the finals.

Up to this we had been on stage with only footlights on which shone into our faces, with the rest of the theatre practically blacked out so that one only saw a blur of front-seat faces. Also, the accompanying pianist who, incidentally, was the world-famous organist, Sydney Torch, was down below stage level and played the introduction to my song as I walked to the mike in centre stage so that I was ready to start as soon as I got there. This gave no time for stage fright! On the final night, alas, everything was very different. Firstly, the house lights were full on, Sydney Torch was on stage and waited until I reached the mike before beginning the intro. Also, I knew Sam Browne, vocalist from the famous Ambrose Orchestra was there to present the prizes. I suppose all this was enough to put my nerves on edge. I was shaking!

I began the song but before I had sung many words I knew I had made the awful mistake of beginning the wrong line, and this, inevitably, would not lead me correctly to the next bar. I threw a panicky glance towards Sydney Torch and he, great musician that he was, had realised my mistake!

He gave me a kind nod, indicating for me to re-start the song. This I did and went thro' it okay to the end. But unfortunately, that silly blunder engendered no sympathy from the audience and it lost me the contest. The two chaps who came through with me from the preceding round came first and third - I was completely OUT! The only nice thing was that Sam Browne, when he shook hands with us at the end, expressed his sympathy with me concerning my blunder, saying "Bad luck!"

After this I continued to sing Bing songs at every possible opportunity, at private parties, at work, everywhere...but I did nothing in the way of contests or as a pro or semi-pro until I was 21. Then, through my work, I came into contact with a fine musician, a guitarist named Wally Baron who with his band did a lot of dates in the North London area.

I became Wally's vocalist, and naturally, the bulk of my songs were those of Bing and things went very nicely for a couple of years or so when Wally Baron got the chance to go to South Africa. Just before he departed he presented me with his complete library of music - really immense - and invited me to carry on using the lads in the band. But this didn't work out. They lived in the North London area while I was more to the East. So, I decided to concentrate my efforts in my own area.

My first big job came on a New Year's Night Ball organised by the local paper, The Walthamstow Guardian. This was to be held at the Leyton Town Hall. By this time I had made contact with another fine musician by the name of Al Deering, who played all three saxes - alto, tenor, and baritone, plus of course, clarinet. Al already had the band but we did the "job" under my name - and I can see now the huge billboards about 12/14 feet high and about 8 feet across along Hoe Str. E.17. in letters about 2 foot high: DAN QUINN AND HIS BAND! I felt quite a few qualms at this publicity but the night duly came - and happily, it turned out a big success. I had been lucky in being able to hire some amplifying equipment and as a result it brought out my bass tones quite well and my singing went down very well. Made me sound more like Bing than ever! My memory is shaky as to the actual songs I sang that night but I do recall that one of the celebrated Crosby songs I put over went so well that the packed hall of dancers turned towards the stand at the end and applauded en masse for several minutes. I felt like a KING - a Bing-King!

My collaboration with Al Deering continued happily and then, while we didn't realise it, there came our last job. This was an engagement at the local cinema/variety theatre - the Gaumont if I remember rightly - situated in Lea Bridge Road, Walthamstow. I had managed to talk the manager into letting me put on a variety show between films

on the Friday night. This was another feature of those days, of course, - apart from the two films there would be one night when they would do about half-an-hour to an hour of variety in between the films. I told him I would provide a 15-piece band with myself as featured vocalist, plus a female singer and two variety acts, using all local people. Perhaps he liked my face, or perhaps my cheek! Anyway, he okayed the show. With Al Deering we managed the 15 piece outfit and they did two band pieces - one of which was SONG OF INDIA, I forget the other - and then accompanied the lady singer and myself.

One of the songs I did was BLUE SKIES - and to our great delight the entire performance once more turned out a big success. So much so, in fact, that the manager of the cinema promised to get us a tour of the whole Gaumont circuit.

But before this could be done, Mr. Chamberlain had been to Munich in his futile effort... and in a short while we were at War with Germany. So ended those reasonably carefree and very musical days of the golden decade. Soon we were all in different jobs, awaiting call-up or indeed, rushing into the forces - and all I really wanted to do was SING LIKE BING!

What a fascinating glimpse of the 30s Danny gives us! Bands, Sydney Torch, talent shows, Ambrose, Sam Browne, cine-variety (not telly!)...and Bing, Bing, Bing! Danny would be very interested if anyone in the N. London area can recall him - for the summer he is at "Wayside", Catsham, Nr. Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 8PQ tho' normally at Via Bolognese 119a, 50139, Florence, Italy. I have more of Danny's story to come: we have dealt with 1944 a lot in this issue and that, too, was an extremely fateful year for Danny Quinn for he fell in love - and decided to live in Italy. This brought him happiness, success in business - and not a few regrets...mainly because he felt "out of touch" with the music scene generally, and Bing in particular.

KEN BARNES, producer of Bing's London recordings, was tickled pink with the last issue of BING - and kindly reckons John Bassett and I could give lessons to Fleet St. in accuracy!

PAT FORSTER, 11, Norfolk Close, St. Margarets, E. Twickenham, Midd'x would very much like the following: BING'S HOLLYWOOD 1 "Easy to Remember"; (the only one she hasn't got and is deperate!); LA 8674 BING SINGS THE HITS; LAT 8154 "HIGH TOR"; LAT 8331 IN A LITTLE SPANISH TOWN"; LAT 8334 DRIFTING & DREAMING; LAT 8550 LITTLE ONE/HAPPY PRINCE; DL 8374 SOME FINE OLD CHESTNUTS; DL 8687 AROUND THE WORLD WITH BING; DL 3769 or AH BING SINGS FOR CHILDREN; GLP ALI BABA AND THE 40 THIEVES, and AH 198:23 JACK BE NIMBLE....if you can help.

Our loquacious friend, JOHN C. MARSHALL, 39 Kings Rd., Teddington, Midd'x has, as no doubt many have heard, been very successful in getting Bing and the IOC mentioned on radio. He has a particularly ingratiating way of getting this done. This I applaud but don't feel it prudent to reveal how! Some of the DJs and comperes read this and John's success may come to an abrupt end! However, he seems now to have the interest of Jack de Manio and has all sorts of plans....

JACK LARKINS, 68 Tobruk Ave., West Heidelberg 3081, Melbourne, AUSTRALIA: "I have a spare hard-cover copy of Bing's CALL ME LUCKY and invites offers. Jack would prefer an exchange for he has wide interests in the 30s: Hylton, sheet-music, early Bing material...all letters answered - Jack added that Australia finally got the radio Bing Story.. JACK SOUTHER, 2011-44th AVE. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94117, USA: I have 100s of Bing discs, all sizes, speeds, rare and other, for disposal. I have wants...drop me a line with what YOU have for disposal..... and finally to HOLLAND! ALEX. CLAYTON, who judging by his name is an "exile": I'd give my right hand to meet Bing! The only man in the profession whose head became smaller as his fame grew bigger...as a human being he must be the finest to walk this earth; when he appeared to be at death's door in Jan. '74 I was one of the millions who prayed for his recovery. He did, and may be spend many, many more years with us. Let's hope one day he will lead his only daughter up the aisle...surely his happiest day....Maybe I'm not very good at writing about Bing, but I want everyone to know what a great man I think he is. My small tribute to the greatest of men..... Hmmm.... well, let's hope Alex. meets Bing one day; loss of right hand would horrify Bing!!

HAPPY READING/LISTENING 'TIL SEPTEMBER.